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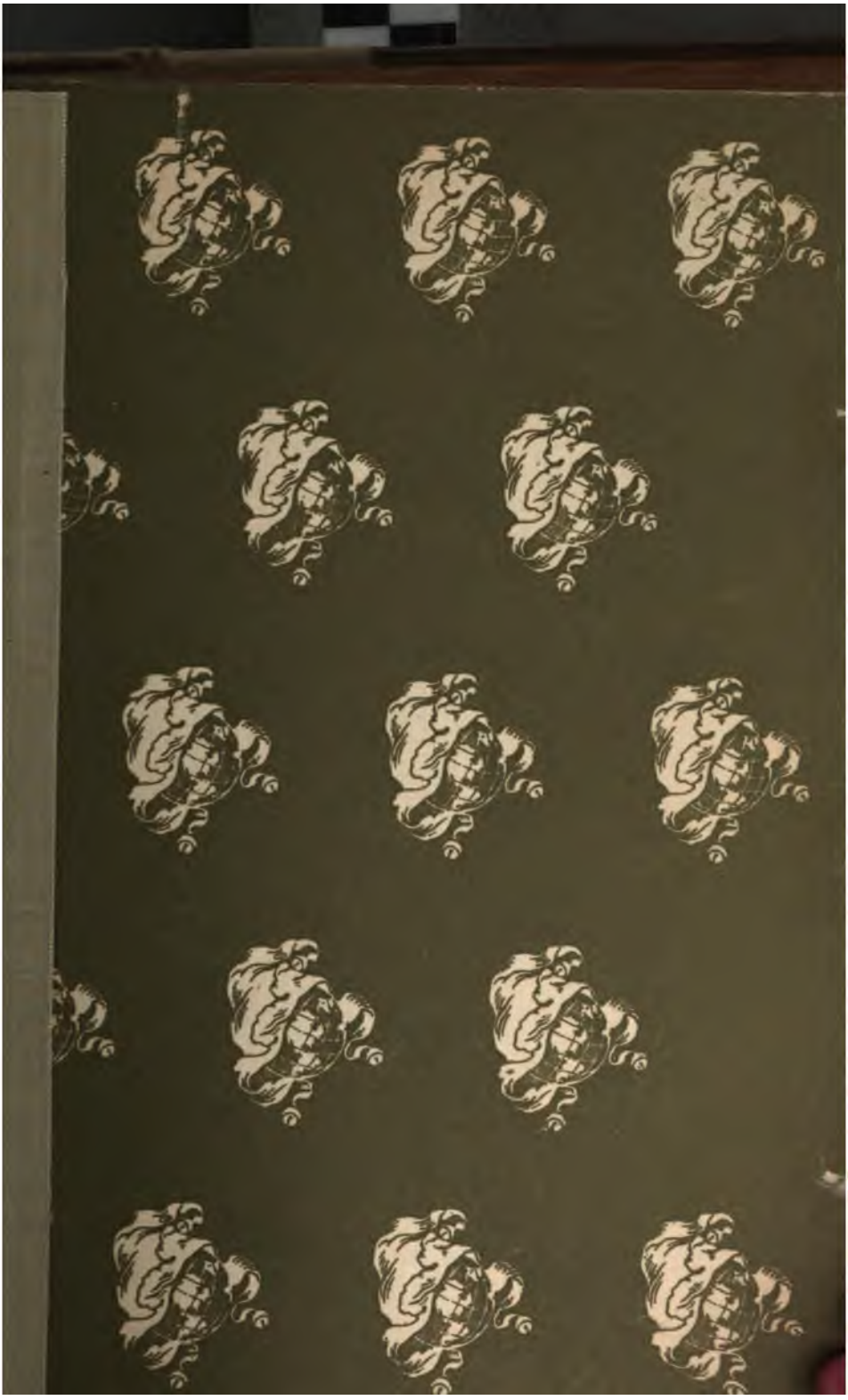

The World's Wit and Humor

The World's Wit and Humor

An Encyclopedia of the Classic Wit and Humor of all Ages and Nations

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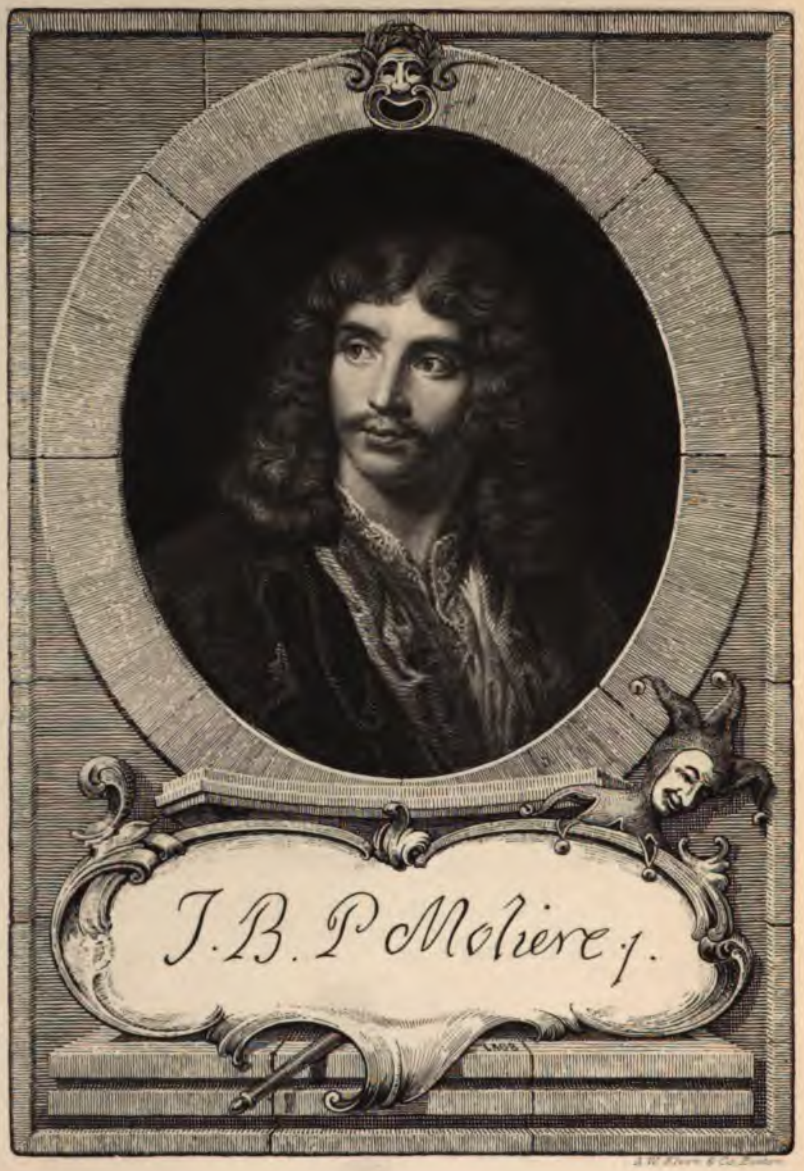
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The World's Wit and Humor

FRENCH

Introduction by
BRANDER MATTHEWS

Volume X

Rutebœuf to Balzac

New York
The Review of Reviews Company
1906

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The Humor of Continental Europe

By Brander Matthews

IN a recent consideration of the psychology of laughter, a French philosopher recalled the old story of the man in church who remained unmoved when the rest of the congregation were dissolved in tears by the power and the pathos of the sermon, and who explained his self-control as due simply to the fact that he did not belong to that parish. And M. Bergson then asserted that this explanation, absurd as it may seem at first, is not unsatisfactory or illogical if applied to laughter rather than to tears. "However hearty a laugh may be," so the acute French observer maintained, "it always conceals an after-thought of complicity with other laughers, real or imaginary;" and he drew attention then to the numberless comic effects which are not translatable from one language to another, because the underlying idea which gives them point and piquancy is peculiar to the people in whose language they were invented. Shakespeare was very shrewd even in his unthinking youth; and it is in one of his earliest plays that he told us how

> "A jest's prosperity lies in the ear
> Of him that hears it."

George Eliot pushed the same thought a little further when she declared that "a difference of taste in jests is a great strain on the affections." We may be interested to know how the other half lives, but we pay little attention to what the

other half laughs at, so long as this does not happen to appeal to our own sense of humor. And yet if we really wish to understand our neighbors, we need to know what it is that they laugh at, what they are willing to laugh at, and what they refuse to laugh at. Fletcher of Saltoun did not care who made the laws of a country so long as he made its songs; and perhaps the old sage would achieve his purpose even more certainly if he had chosen to make the jokes of the people rather than the lyrics or the laws. More than one government has been laughed out of power. The dissolving force of ridicule is indisputable, although there is an immense difference in the quips and mocks which different races find amusing. The French, for example, have often seen no malice in broad caricatures which the British have resented as transgressing the boundaries of decency.

It is one of the commonplaces of criticism now that the drama and the novel have each an interest beyond their literary appeal, because—in so far as they are sincere attempts to set forth life as it appears to the author—they enlarge our knowledge of our fellow-men. Foreign novels and foreign plays contain an unconscious declaration of the thoughts, the feelings, the moral standards of the people for whose entertainment they were devised. In every good play, as in every good work of fiction, we can find a significant revelation of racial characteristics, unintentional, no doubt, but none the less instructive; and it is by the aid of the imaginative literature of a nation that some shrewd observers are accustomed to guide their opinion of that people. And as that shrewdest of observers, Walter Bagehot, once put it with his customary clearness, "There is a certain intimate essence of national meaning, which is as untranslatable as good poetry."

The Humor of Continental Europe

It is because we can abstract from the sincere fiction of foreign peoples this "intimate essence of national meaning" that the novel and the play have for us their larger significance. But from the humor of a people we can express this intimate essence even more certainly than we can from their fiction. "Show me what a man laughs at, and I will tell you what he is." The merry jest which sets in a roar the miscellaneous audience of a variety-show is a document of real value in estimating the character of a population; and the casual quip of a paragrapher which goes the round of the papers may help us to a sound conclusion as swiftly as the more laborious investigations of the political philosopher.

It is not a misleading portrait of the American that the foreigner can find in Artemus Ward, Mark Twain, and Mr. Dooley; and John Bull himself is not more characteristically British than Mr. Punch. Perhaps more sharply than in any other way would a comparison of what is found laughable in the United States with what is found laughable in Great Britain bring out the essential unity of the English-speaking peoples and also the differentiation—superficial, it may be, and yet significant—of the American branch from the British. Probably a master of the new science of ethnic psychology would be able to explain the surprising fact that the merely mechanical pun seems to give pleasure to the inhabitants of the British Isles, although it is strenuously abhorred by the citizens of these States.

Another fact also calling for explanation, although easier to elucidate, is the belief widely held here in America that our kin across the sea are slow-witted, and that they fail to take a joke as swiftly as they might. This belief was once summarily stated by an American who lived in a European city where there was a large British colony. "Telling a joke

to an Englishman," he said, "is like trying to write on blotting-paper." This belief is paralleled, oddly enough, by the conviction of the English themselves that the Scotch are obtuse in matters of humor. It was an Englishman who declared that it took a surgical operation to get a joke into a Scotchman's head. Of course the obvious retort is that it was an English joke that the Scotchman had failed to apprehend; and so it is the American joke which the British are sluggish in perceiving.

The Scotch have a pawky wit of their own, as we all know; but they have also, and in abundance, humor of a more universal currency, exportable everywhere. Sir Walter Scott was as unlike as may be to that editor of the *Scotsman* who confessed that he "jocked wi' deeficulty"; and "Ian Maclaren" and Mr. J. M. Barrie are in no peril of surgical operations. Yet there is truth in the assertion that the men of Edinboro' are often hermetically closed to the humorous appeal of a joke which the men of London find exquisitely amusing, just as the men of London are sometimes hostile, or at least inhospitable, to the joke which has been most warmly welcomed by the men of New York. In other words, there is some humor which is so broad in its humanity that it transcends all boundaries of time and place, of race and of country; and there is humor of another kind, local in its flavor, and needing for its full appreciation the solvent of local sympathy.

In any collection of examples selected from the humorous literature of foreign languages, there should be a proper representation of both these classes—of the humor which is fairly universal in its appeal, like "Don Quixote" and "Tartarin on the Alps," and also of the humor which is more narrowly national, racial, ethnic, and which is therefore more

characteristic and to some extent more significant, although it is to be understood, or at least to be appreciated, only at the cost of a certain effort on the part of the reader into whose language it is translated. Humor of this local aroma, because it is less exportable, is obviously less mirth-provoking, less immediate in its assault upon our risibilities; but it ought never to be greeted with contempt, since it is genuinely helpful in aiding us to an understanding of other peoples.

Just as the difference between the jokes most widely popular in the United States from those most widely popular in Great Britain serve to measure the divergence between the two branches of the English-speaking race, so the difference between the merry jests acceptable wherever English is spoken, and those accepted wherever German is spoken, serve to measure the divergence between the two chief divisions of the old Teutonic stock. Although not a few of the greater humorists of our language, from Shakespeare to Mark Twain, have won popular approval among our second cousins who have German for their native tongue, only one German humorist has ever been acclimated in English; and it cannot be denied that Heine, who was a master of wit, even more than of humor, owed not a little of his peculiar pungency to his Hebrew blood.

Much that the German finds laughable leaves us untempted to mirth, and sometimes it arouses a feeling almost of inimical contempt. The sallies of Schopenhauer and of Nietszche recently reminded Prof. William James "half the time of the sick shriekings of two dying rats." And in one of her earlier essays George Eliot dwelt on the elaborate dreariness of the German comedies she had chanced to see. She quoted Goethe's saying that "nothing is more significant of men's

character than what they find laughable," and she pointed out that Germany had not produced a great wit or a great humorist, excepting only Heine. She added that "whatever may be the stock of fun which Germany yields for home consumption, she has provided little for the palate of other lands." But in the half-century which has elapsed since the English novelist penned her keen appreciation of Heine, the Germans have forged to the front, and many a reproach once well founded has been taken away from them. Of late their comic playwrights have given us a succession of light and lively pieces which have gone all over the world to increase the gaiety of nations; and in their *Fliegende Blätter* the Germans have had now for years what is perhaps the best of all comic weeklies, the richest in pictorial humor. On the other hand, it must be admitted that some contemporary German comic writing seems to be the result of a reaction against the supersaturated sentimentality of a certain type of German novel; and some of it is rather the broad expression of the same smug, burgher-like complacency which is the basis of the sentimentality itself.

The valuable German qualities which an unfriendly critic would sum up as phlegmatic stolidity are discoverable abundantly in German humor; and so also are the valuable qualities of the French people easily visible in their far richer comic literature, the history of which is illumined not only by a host of brilliant wits, but also by two of the great humorists of the world—Rabelais and Molière. In Molière, indeed, are concentrated not a few of the best characteristics of the French, their inventive ingenuity, their keen appreciation of character, their shrewd common-sense, their playful mockery, and their sincere hatred of hypocrisy. Where an Englishman boasts of his virtue, a Frenchman boasts of

his vices; and there is often as little foundation for the one as for the other. Behind the gross and extravagant fun of Rabelais, underneath it, sustaining it, is a frank belief in the perfectibility of humanity, a hearty recognition of the good there is in mankind. And this also supports the large and generous comedy of Molière, in whose plays, farcical or philosophic as they may be, we can always see the workings of the social instinct, of the idea of solidarity, which is a dominant factor of French civilization.

Molière, perhaps it needs to be noted, was not a wit, but a humorist. From all his plays there is scarcely to be collected a single witticism existing for its own sake, such as abound in Shakespeare's comedies. Molière can be witty on occasion; but his wit is always under control, and it is kept at the service of character and of plot. His fun is at times almost as bold, as robust, and as exuberant as the humor of Rabelais, and it is even more genial. His humor is rarely divorced from good-humor, and it is always frank. It is never sneaking and insidious; it is never disintegrating, like the irony of that arch-wit, M. de Voltaire, or of his twentieth-century disciple, M. Anatole France. Delightful as is their playfulness, charming in its grace and ease, fascinating in its certainty of attack, it is dangerous also, and destructive. At bottom, Voltaire assumed an aristocratic attitude, while Molière is fundamentally democratic; and perhaps this is one reason why we are sometimes inclined to wonder whether wit does not tend inevitably to cruelty, while humor is more likely to be kindly and even gentle.

A humorist again, and not a wit, is the gentle and kindly Cervantes; and yet, being a Spaniard, he reveals now and again more or less that callousness which is the most obvious characteristic of the picaresque novels, those romances of

roguery wherein we are invited to find entertainment in brutal practical joking and in the discomfiture of physical deformity. "Don Quixote" sets before us the rude contrast between the real and the ideal; and it shows us sharply—in Lowell's apt phrase—"the perpetual and comic contradiction between the spiritual and the natural man in actual life." So noble is the misguided knight, and so caressing has been the touch of his creator, that we moderns do not quite like certain of the later episodes in which Don Quixote is forced to figure to his disadvantage, and which make us feel that the author is not dealing reverently with the creature of his own imagination. And if we venture to blame Cervantes for this, we are but paying him the compliment of taking his humorous mouthpiece more seriously than he took it himself. To his contemporaries, who devoured the story greedily, it seems to have been accepted as a mere jest-book, as a narrative of mirth-provoking misadventure; and the century had gone before its deeper qualities began to be recognized. And even now there are Spaniards who do not altogether relish the book in which the figures of the lofty-minded knight and of his simple squire are set over against each other, bodying forth, once for all, the elevated idealism and the frank realism, which are the two extremes of the national character. Coleridge, with his swiftness of insight, declared that "the genius of the Spanish people is exquisitely subtle, without being at all acute; hence there is so much humor and so little wit in their literature. The genius of the Italians, on the contrary, is acute, profound, and sensual, but not subtle; hence what they think to be humorous is merely witty."

More illuminative than the humor of the Italians is that of the Russians, a humor rarely laughter-evoking, often

sad, frequently grim, sometimes almost savage, and always unlike that of any other people—as Russia itself is unlike any other country. It is the humor of a patient folk, long-suffering under a rule that is rarely relaxed, submissive with the despondency of those who have little hope of improvement, and scarcely even the desire for it, and who have been schooled by the centuries to take things as they come and to make the best of them. In the humorous literature of Russia there is little of the lightness and brightness and briskness which we find among the French; there is rather a saturnine slyness, the heritage of generations of serfdom. Of all the great novelists of the nineteenth century, of all that marvelous company who have recorded for us what manner of men our fathers were, there are none greater than Turgeniev and Tolstoy—and there are none in whose writings there is so little that moves to laughter.

Every man laughs in his own fashion and in accordance with the customs of his race and of his age. He may laugh little, like the Russian, or he may be swift to see a joke, like the American; but none the less is man the only biped that knows how to laugh at all, and it is our gift of laughter, as much as anything else, which sets us apart from the beasts of the field. The gift is precious, and not to be hidden in a napkin. "Whoever and wherever and however situated a man is," said Beecher, "he must watch three things—sleeping, digestion, and laughing. They are three indispensable necessities." They belong together, and laughter is not the least of the three.

French Wit and Humor

French Wit and Humor

Rutebœuf

The Ass's Testament

A PRIEST there was in times of old,
Fond of his church, but fonder of gold,
Who spent his days and all his thought
In getting what he preached was naught.
His chests were full of robes and stuff,
Corn filled his garners to the roof,
Stored up against the fair-times gay,
From Saint Rémy to Easter Day.
An ass he had within his stable,
A beast most sound and valuable.
For twenty years he lent his strength
For the priest, his master, till at length,
Worn out with work and age, he died.
The priest, who loved him, wept and cried;
And, for his service long and hard,
Buried him in his own churchyard.

Now turn we to another thing:
'Tis of a bishop that I sing.
No greedy miser he, I ween;
Prelate so generous ne'er was seen.
Full well he loved in company
Of all good Christians still to be;
When he was well, his pleasure still,
His medicine best when he was ill.

Always his hall was full, and there
His guests had ever best of fare.
Whate'er the bishop lack'd or lost
Was bought at once despite the cost;
And so, in spite of rent and score,
The bishop's debts grew more and more.
For true it is—this ne'er forget—
Who spends too much gets into debt.
One day his friends all with him sat,
The bishop talking this and that,
Till the discourse on rich clerks ran,
Of greedy priests, and how their plan
Was all good bishops still to grieve,
And of their dues their lords deceive.
And then the priest of whom I've told
Was mention'd; how he loved his gold.
And because men do often use
More freedom than the truth would choose,
They gave him wealth, and wealth so much,
As those like him could scarcely touch.
"And then besides, a thing he's done,
By which great profit might be won,
Could it be only spoken here."
Quoth the bishop, "Tell it without fear."
"He's worse, my lord, than Bedouin,
Because his own dead ass, Baldwin,
He buried in the sacred ground."
"If this is truth, as shall be found,"
The bishop cried, "a forfeit high
Will on his worldly riches lie.
Summon this wicked priest to me;
I will myself in this case be

The judge. If Robert's word be true,
Mine are the fine and forfeit too."

. . . . . .

"Disloyal! God's enemy and mine,
Prepare to pay a heavy fine.
Thy ass thou buriedst in the place
Sacred to church. Now, by God's grace,
I never heard of crime more great.
What! Christian men with asses wait?
Now, if this thing be proven, know
Surely to prison thou wilt go."
"Sir," said the priest, "thy patience grant;
A short delay is all I want.
Not that I fear to answer now—
But give me what the laws allow."
And so the bishop leaves the priest,
Who does not feel as if at feast.
But still, because one friend remains,
He trembles not at prison pains.
His purse it is which never fails
For tax or forfeit, fine or vails.

The term arrived, the priest appeared,
And met the bishop, nothing feared;
For 'neath his girdle safe there hung
A leathern purse, well stocked and strung
With twenty pieces fresh and bright,
Good money all, none clipped or light.
"Priest," said the bishop, "if thou have
Answer to give to charge so grave,
'Tis now the time."

"Sir, grant me leave
My answer secretly to give.
Let me confess to you alone,
And, if needs be, my sins atone."
The bishop bent his head to hear,
The priest he whispered in his ear:
"Sir, spare a tedious tale to tell.
My poor ass served me long and well,
For twenty years my faithful slave,
Each year his work a saving gave
Of twenty sous—so that in all
To twenty livres the sum will fall;
And, for the safety of his soul,
To you, my lord, he left the whole."
"'Twas rightly done," the bishop said,
And gravely shook his godly head:
"And, that his soul to heaven may go,
My absolution I bestow."
Now have you heard a truthful lay,
How with rich priests the bishops play;
And Rutebœuf the moral draws
That, spite of kings' and bishops' laws,
'Gainst evil is the man secure
That shields himself with money's lure.

Doun de Laverne

How a Peasant Won Paradise by Wit

Recorded in a book we find
Adventure of surprising kind:
How that a villain basely born
Died on a certain Friday morn,
And by some chance it came to pass,
Nor angel nigh nor devil was.
Just at the moment he was dead
And soul was from the body fled,
It found that no one gave it heed
Or ordered whither it should speed.
Know that the soul thereat was glad,
For many an anxious fear it had;
Then toward the heavens it turned its eyes,
And there th' Archangel Michael spies,
Who with great joy a spirit bore.
The soul did after Michael soar,
And so fast followed on his heels,
That into Paradise he steals.
Saint Peter, guardian of the door,
Received the soul the angel bore;
Then after he that soul had ta'en,
Back to the portal turned again,
And of the new-born soul aware,
Demanded who had brought him there.

"Here no one is received," quoth he,
"Unless adjudged he worthy be;
And above all, by Saint Alain,
We are not here for low-born men.
Villains have nothing here to do,
And who is villain more than you?"
"Lord Peter," cried the soul, "'tis known
You always were as hard as stone;
By Paternoster, God was wrong
To place you 'mid th' Apostles' throng.
To Him small honor you afford,
You who did once deny your Lord;
Your faith was but of little price,
Since you did e'en deny Him thrice.
Though you are now received, 'tis true,
Does Paradise belong to you?
Begone, where are the traitor brood:
For me—I loyal am and good,
And I by right an entrance claim."
Saint Peter then was struck with
shame,
Downcast he turned and ill beset,
And shortly with Saint Thomas met.
To him his story did unfold,
And all his misadventure told,
And his annoy and conquered state.
Saint Thomas said, "I'll to him straight;
Now God forbid he here should stay;"
Then to the villain bent his way.
"Villain!" began th' Apostle thus,
"This manor is reserved for us,
For Martyrs and for Saints alone.

Pray, where good actions have you done
By which an entrance here is won?
Here God's true servants' lot is cast."
"Oh, Thomas, Thomas, much too fast
Your lawyer's judgment you bestow.
Was it not you—as all men know—
Who to th' Apostles did declare,
When they had seen their Lord appear
After His resurrection,
Nay, e'en did swear, your truth upon,
You would reject Him and deny,
Unless each wound your fingers try?
Thus were you vile and miscreant both."
At this Saint Thomas felt full loath
More to dispute, so bent his head,
And to Saint Paul he quickly sped;
There his disaster told he all.
"Now, by my head, I'll go," said Paul,
"And know what he will dare reply."
The soul deigned not to hide or fly,
But walked at ease through Paradise.
"Soul, who has brought you here?" he cries.
"Where and what merits can you show
To pass the gates of heaven through?
Villain, quit Paradise," he called.
"Why, what, is this Don Paul the Bald?
And were not you that soldier erst
Who of all tyrants was the worst?
None ever showed more cruel mind
As did the good Saint Stephen find,
Whom you stirred up the Jews to stone:
By me your life is fully known.

Full many saints to death you sped,
Until God dealt upon your head
With His strong hand a weighty blow.
To mart or game did we ne'er go,
And heard the tale while drinking wine;
A pretty saint, a good divine!
Think you by me you are not known?"
Saint Paul in agony was thrown,
And quickly turned to quit the ground;
And then again Saint Thomas found,
Who did with Peter council hold,
And straight to them the marvel told,
How in debate the serf had won:
"He has defeated me, I own,
To him I Paradise decree."
Then to God's presence went the three.
Saint Peter clearly then proclaimed
How by the villain all were shamed:
"O'er us his words gained victory;
And I am so confused thereby,
That none from me the tale shall know."
Our Lord said, "I myself will go;
This marvel 'tis my will to hear."
He sought the soul, and called him near,
And questioned how it came to pass
That without leave he entered has.
"Nor man's nor woman's soul has e'er
Without permission entered here.
On my Apostles have you railed,
With slander and abuse assailed;
And think you dwelling here to gain?"
"Lord, I should here as well remain

As they, if I be justly tried.
By me you never were denied,
Your name I never feared to own,
And by my hand has perished none;
On them this load of error lies,
Yet are they now in Paradise.
Long as my body did endure,
I led my life unsoiled and pure;
To poor I gave my bread away,
And sheltered them by night and day;
I kept them warm my hearth beside,
And gave them succor till they died;
Then bore them to the church, as meet.
And neither shirt nor winding-sheet
Did I e'er let them go without;
If 'twas well done or ill, I doubt.
Then I confessed me honestly,
Received your Body worthily;
Who thus does die, and thus does live,
We hear, God will his sins forgive.
You know if I have truly said.
When here I entered none forbade,
And being here, why should I go?
I should belie your promise so;
For you have said beyond all doubt,
Once here none shall be driven out;
Sure, in my case, you will not fail."
"Villain," said God, "your words prevail.
You plead so well for Paradise,
That by your speech you gain the prize:
In a good school you have been bred,
And have well weighed all you have said.

Good reasons know you to invoke."
The villain then this proverb spoke:
"Right by degrees aye conquers wrong,
And wit beyond all force is strong."

Eustache Deschamps

Advice to a Friend on Marriage

Ope! Who? A friend! What wouldst obtain?
  Advice! Whereof? Is't well to wed?
I wish to marry. What's your pain?
  No wife have I for board and bed,
  By whom my house is wisely led.
One meek and fair I wish to gain,
  Young, wealthy, too, and nobly bred;
You're crazy—batter out your brain!

Consider! Grief can you sustain?
  Women have tempers bold and dread;
When for a dish of eggs you're fain,
  Broth, cheese, you'll have before you spread:
  Now free, you'll be a slave instead—
When married, you yourself have slain.
  Think well. My first resolve is said;
You're crazy—batter out your brain!

No wife will be like her you feign;
  On angry words you shall be fed,
So shall you bitterly complain,
  With woes too hard to bear, bested:
  Better a life in forest led
Than of such beast to bear the strain.
  No! The sweet fancy fills my head;
You're crazy—batter out your brain!

Envoy

Soon you will long that you were dead
  When married; seek in street or lane
Some love. No! Passion bids me wed;
  You're crazy—batter out your brain!

François Villon

Ballad of Proverbs

GOATS scrape so long they spoil their bed;
  Pitchers till split to wells are ta'en;
Iron is heated till 'tis red,
  And hammered till it bursts in twain;
  Man's worth, just how the child we train;
Who travel far will disappear;
  Ill bred will ill through life remain;
We call out Christmas till 'tis here.

Men jest till power to laugh has fled;
  Who leans on others, hopes in vain;
Waste leads to want is truly said;
  One bird in hand beats chance of twain;
  God's love doth love of Church sustain;
Much giving is to borrowing near;
  The wind shifts till it brings the rain;
We call out Christmas till 'tis here.

Dogs lick the hands by which they're fed;
  Songs run till all the tune retain;
Fruit kept too long does mold o'erspread;
  Towns long besieged the foes will gain;
  Who wait too long no luck obtain;
With overhaste you get not near;
  By clutching long you overstrain;
We call out Christmas till 'tis here.

Envoy

Prince, fools live on till wit they gain;
  Men voyage till they homeward steer;
Those cheated long from rogues refrain;
  We call out Christmas till 'tis here.

All Things Except Myself I Know

I KNOW when milk does flies contain;
  I know men by their bravery;
I know fair days from storm and rain;
  And what fruit apple-trees supply;
  And from their gums the trees descry;
I know when all things smoothly flow;
  I know who toil or idle lie;
All things except myself I know.

I know the doublet by the grain;
  The monk beneath the hood can spy;
Master from man can ascertain;
  I know the nun's veiled modesty;
  I know when sportsmen fables ply;
Know fools who creams and dainties stow;
  Wine from the butt I certify;
All things except myself I know.

Know horse from mule by tail and mane;
  I know their worth or high or low;
Bell, Beatrice, I know the twain;
  I know each chance of cards and die;

I know what visions prophesy,
Bohemian heresies, I trow;
I know men of each quality;
All things except myself I know.

Envoy

Prince, I know all things 'neath the sky,
Pale cheeks from those of rosy glow;
I know death whence can no man fly;
All things except myself I know.

Margaret, Queen of Navarre

One Ducat for a Horse

THERE was at Saragossa a merchant who, feeling his end approach, and seeing that he must quit his possessions, which he had, perhaps, acquired with bad faith, thought to make satisfaction in part for his sins after his death by giving some little present to God, as if God gave His grace for money. After giving orders respecting his house, he desired that a fine Spanish horse, which constituted nearly the whole of his wealth, should be sold, and the money bestowed on the poor mendicants; and he charged his wife to do this without fail immediately after his death. The burial being over, and the first tears shed, the wife, who was no more of a simpleton than Spanish women are in general, said to the man-servant, who, like her, had heard her husband deliver his last will, "Methinks I lose enough in losing my husband, whom I so tenderly loved, without losing also the rest of my property. I would by no means, however, contravene the orders he laid upon me, but would rather improve upon his intentions. The poor man, beguiled by the avarice of the priests, thought to make a sacrifice to God, in giving away after his death a sum, one crown of which he would not have given in his lifetime, however pressing might be the need, as you very well know. It has occurred to me, then, that we will do what he ordered us much better than he could have done it himself had he lived a few days longer, but no one in the world must know a word about it."

The man having promised to keep the secret, she continued:

"You will take the horse to the market, and when you are asked the price you will say one ducat. But I have a very good cat which I want to sell also. You will sell it along with the horse, and charge for it ninety-nine ducats, making of the two one hundred ducats, which is the price at which my husband wished to sell the horse alone."

The man promptly obeyed his mistress's orders. As he was walking the horse about in the market-place, carrying the cat under his arm, a gentleman who knew the horse, and had before wished to buy it, came up and asked what he would take for it at a word. "A ducat," said the man.

"I would thank you not to make game of me," said the gentleman.

"I assure you, sir," said the man, "it will cost you no more. However, you must buy this cat at the same time, and I want ninety-nine ducats for it."

The gentleman, who thought it a pretty good bargain, paid him forthwith a ducat for the horse, and then the remainder for the cat, and had his two purchases taken home. The man on his side went off with the money to his mistress, who was delighted to get it, and failed not to bestow on the poor mendicants, according to her husband's intentions, the ducat for which the horse had been sold, and kept the rest to provide for her own wants and those of her family.

—*"The Heptameron."*

A Lady's Passion for a Cordelier Cured with a Stick

THERE was at Pampeluna a lady who was reputed fair and virtuous, and at the same time the most devout and chaste in the country. She loved her husband much, and was so obedient to him that he had entire confidence in her. She was wholly occupied with God's service, and never missed a single sermon, and omitted nothing by which she could hope to persuade her husband and her children to be as devout as herself, who was but thirty years old, an age at which women commonly resign the pretensions of beauties for those of new she-sages.

On the first day of Lent this lady went to church to receive the ashes which are a memorial of death. A cordelier, whose austerity of life had gained him the reputation of a saint, and who, in spite of his austerity and his macerations, was neither so meager nor so pale but that he was one of the handsomest men in the world, was to preach the sermon. The lady listened to him with great devotion, and gazed no less intently on the preacher. Her ears and her eyes lost nothing that was presented to them, and both alike found wherewithal to be gratified. The preacher's words penetrated to her heart through her ears; and the charms of his countenance passing through her eyes, insinuated themselves so deeply into her mind, that she felt, as it were, in an ecstasy. The sermon being ended, the cordelier celebrated Mass, at which the lady was present, and she took the ashes from his hand, which was as white and shapely as that of any lady's. She paid much more attention to the monk's hand than to

the ashes he gave her, persuading herself that this spiritual love could not hurt her conscience, whatever pleasure she received from it. She failed not to go every day to the sermon, and to take her husband with her; and both so highly admired the preacher, that at table and elsewhere they talked of nothing but him.

This fire, for all its spirituality, at last became so carnal, that the heart of this poor lady, which was first kindled by it, consumed all the rest. Slow as she had been to feel the flame, she was equally prompt to take fire, and she felt the pleasure of her passion before she was aware that passion had possession of her. Love, which had rendered himself master of the lady, no longer encountered any resistance on her part; but the mischief was, that the physician who might have relieved her pain was not aware of her malady. Banishing, therefore, all fear, and the shame she ought to have felt in exposing her wild fantasy to so sober-minded a man, and her incontinence to one so saintly and virtuous, she resolved to acquaint him in writing of the love she cherished for him; which she did as modestly as she could, and gave her letter to a little page, with instructions as to what he was to do, especially enjoining him to take good care that her husband did not see him go to the cordelier's.

The page, taking the shortest road, passed through a street where his master happened, by the merest chance, to be sitting in a shop. The gentleman seeing him pass, stepped forward to see which way he was going; and the page perceiving this, hid himself with some trepidation. His master saw this, followed him, and seizing him by the arm, asked him whither he was going. His embarrassed and unmeaning replies, and his manifest fright, aroused the suspicions of the gentleman, who threatened to beat him if he did not tell

the truth. "Oh, sir," said the little page, "if I tell you, my mistress will kill me." The gentleman no longer doubted that his wife was making a bargain without him, encouraged the page, and assured him that nothing should befall him if he spoke the truth—on the contrary, he should be well rewarded; but if he told a lie, he should be imprisoned for life. Thus urged by fear and hope, the page acquainted him with the real fact, and showed him the letter his mistress had written to the preacher, whereat the husband was the more shocked, as he had been all his life assured of the fidelity of his wife, in whom he had never seen a fault.

Being a wise man, however, he dissembled his anger, and further to try his wife, he answered her letter in the preacher's name, thanking her for her gracious inclination, and assuring her that it was fully reciprocated. The page, after being sworn by his master to manage the affair discreetly, carried this letter to his mistress, who was so transported with joy, that her husband perceived it by the change in her countenance; for instead of her fastings in Lent having emaciated her, she looked handsomer and fresher than ever. It was now mid-Lent, but the lady, without concerning herself about the Lord's Passion or the Holy Week, wrote as usual to the preacher, the theme being always her amorous rage. When he turned his eyes in her direction, or spoke of the love of God, she always imagined that he addressed himself covertly to her, and so far as her eyes could explain what was passing in her heart, she did not suffer them to be idle.

The husband, who regularly replied to her in the name of the cordelier, wrote to her after Easter, begging she would contrive to give him a meeting in private; and she, impatiently longing for an opportunity to do so, advised her husband to go see some land they had near Pampeluna. He said

he would do so, and went and concealed himself in the house of one of his friends, whereupon the lady wrote to the cordelier that her husband was in the country, and that he might come and see her.

The gentleman, wishing to prove his wife's heart thoroughly, went and begged the preacher to lend him his robe. The cordelier, who was a good man, replied that his rule forbade him to do so, and that for no consideration would he lend his robe to go masking in. The gentleman assured him it was not for any idle diversion he wanted it, but for an important matter, and one necessary to his salvation; whereupon the cordelier, who knew him to be a worthy, pious man, lent him the robe. The gentleman then procured a false beard and a false nose, put cork in his shoes to make himself as tall as the monk, put on the robe, which covered the greater part of his face, so that his eyes were barely seen, and, in a word, dressed himself up so that he might easily be mistaken for the preacher. Thus disguised, he stole by night into his wife's chamber, where she was expecting him in great devotion. The poor creature did not wait for him to come to her, but ran to embrace him like a woman out of her senses. Keeping his head down to avoid being recognized, he began to make the sign of the cross, pretending to shun her, and crying, "Temptation! Temptation!"

"Alas! you are right, father," said she; "for there is no more violent temptation than that which proceeds from love. You have promised to afford me relief, and I pray you to have pity on me now that we have time and opportunity."

So saying, she made great efforts to embrace him, while he kept dodging her in all directions, still making great signs of the cross, and crying, "Temptation! Temptation!" But when he found that she was pressing him too closely, he

drew a stout stick from under his robe, and thrashed her so soundly that he put an end to the temptation. This done, he left the house without being known, and immediately returned his borrowed robe, assuring the owner that he had used it to great advantage. Next day he returned home as if from a journey, and found his wife in bed. Pretending not to know the nature of her malady, he asked her what ailed her. She replied that she was troubled with a kind of catarrh, and that she could neither move hand nor foot. The husband, who had a great mind to laugh, pretended to be very sorry, and by way of cheering her, said that he had invited the pious preacher to supper. "Oh, my dear!" said she, "don't think of inviting such people, for they bring ill luck wherever they go."

"Why, my love," replied the husband, "you know how much you have said to me in praise of this good father. For my part, I believe if there is a holy man on earth, it is he."

"They are all very well at church and in the pulpit," she rejoined; "but in private houses they are antichrists. Don't let me see him, my dear, I entreat you, for, ill as I am, it would be the death of me."

"Well, you shall not see him, since you do not choose to do so; but I cannot help having him to supper."

"Do as you please," said she; "only, for mercy's sake, let me not set eyes on him, for I cannot endure such folk."

After entertaining the cordelier at supper, the husband said to him, "I look upon you, father, as a man so beloved by God, that I am sure He will grant any prayer of yours. I entreat you, then, to have pity on my poor wife. She has been possessed these eighteen days by an evil spirit, so that she wants to bite and scratch everybody, and neither cross nor holy water does she care for one bit; but I believe firmly

that if you put your hand on her, the devil will go away. From my heart, I beseech you to do so."

"All things are possible to him who believes, my son," replied the good father. "Are you not well assured that God never refuses His grace to those who ask for it with faith?"

"I am assured of this, father."

"Be assured also, my son, that He is able and willing, and that He is not less mighty than forgiving. Let us strengthen ourselves in faith to resist this roaring lion, and snatch from him his prey."

Thereupon the gentleman conducted the excellent man into the room where his wife was resting on a couch. Believing that it was he who had beaten her, she was roused to a prodigious degree of fury at the sight of him, but her husband's presence made her hang down her head and hold her tongue. "As long as I am present," said the husband to the good father, "the devil does not torment; but as soon as I leave her, you will sprinkle her with holy water, and then you will see how violently the evil spirit works her." So saying, the husband left him alone with his wife, and stopped outside the door to see what would ensue.

When she found herself alone with the cordelier, she began to scream at him like a mad woman, "Villain! Cheat! Monster! Murderer!" The cordelier, believing in good faith that she was possessed, wanted to take hold of her head, in order to pray over it; but she scratched and bit him so fiercely that he was obliged to stand farther off, throwing plenty of holy water over her, and saying many good prayers. The husband, seeing it was time to put an end to the farce, entered the room again, and thanked the cordelier for the pains he had taken. The moment he appeared there was an

end to the wife's termagent behavior, and she meekly kissed the cross for fear of her husband. The pious cordelier, who had seen her in such a fury, believed firmly that our Lord had expelled the devil at his prayer, and went away praising God for this miracle. The husband, seeing his wife so well cured of her folly, would never tell her what he had done, contenting himself with having brought her back to the right way by his prudence, and having put her into such a frame of mind that she mortally hated what she had so unwisely loved, and was filled with detestation for her own infatuation. Thenceforth she was weaned from all superstition, and devoted herself to her husband and her family in a very different way from what she had done before.

—*"The Heptameron."*

The Miracle of the Lighted Candle

THERE was a very dark chapel in the church of St. John of Lyons, and in front of the chapel a stone tomb, with figures of great personages as large as life, and several men-at-arms represented in sleeping postures round them. A soldier walking about the church one day—it was in the heat of summer—felt inclined to sleep. He cast his eyes on this chapel, and seeing it was dark and cool, he went and lay down among the other recumbent figures on the tomb, and fell asleep. Presently up came a very pious old woman, who, after performing her devotions with a candle in her hand, wanted to fix it to the tomb, and the sleeping man being more within her reach than the other figures, she set about sticking the candle on his forehead, imagining that it was

stone. But the wax would not stick. The good woman, supposing that this was in consequence of the coldness of the image, clapped the lighted end of the candle to its forehead, but the image, which was not insensible, began to roar. The good woman was frightened almost out of her wits, and shrieked out, "A miracle, a miracle!" so loudly that all the people in church ran, some to the bells, others to the scene of the miracle. She took them to see the image which had stirred, which made many laugh. Certain priests, not contenting themselves with laughing, resolved to turn the tomb to account, and make as much money of it as of the crucifix on their pulpit, which was said to have spoken. But the public display of an old woman's silliness frustrated their deceitful intention.—"*The Heptameron.*"

Jehan du Pontalais

Money

WHO money has, well wages the campaign;
Who money has, becomes of gentle strain;
Who money has, to honor all accord:
He is my lord.
Who money has, the ladies ne'er disdain;
Who money has, loud praises will attain;
Who money has, in the world's heart is stored,
The flower adored.
O'er all mankind he holds his conquering track—
They only are condemned who money lack.

Who money has, will wisdom's credit gain;
Who money has, all earth is his domain;
Who money has, praise is his sure reward,
Which all afford.
Who money has, from nothing need refrain;
Who money has, on him is favor poured;
And, in a word,
Who money has, need never fear attack—
They only are condemned who money lack.

Who money has, in every heart does reign;
Who money has, all to approach are fain;
Who money has, of him no fault is told,
Nor harm can hold.

Jehan du Pontalais

Who money has, none does his right restrain;
Who money has, can whom he will maintain;
Who money has, clerk, prior, by his gold,
Is straight enrolled.
Who money has, all raise, none hold him back—
They only are condemned who money lack.

Unknown Author

The Usurer's Paternoster

THE usurer betimes arose,
And did the bolts and bars unclose
To see if any sought his door
To borrow money from his store;
Then in his shoes and clothes arrayed,
He woke from sleep his wife and maid.
"Now quickly rise, my orders heed:
Should any hither come who need
To borrow, and their pledge pull forth,
That I lose not, mark well its worth;
Then haste to me, but quietly;
I in the little church shall be;
For no long time I there shall wait,
In short time will the loss be great."
This said, no longer he delayed,
But gained the church, and thus he prayed:

Paternoster—

"Oh, gracious Lord,
To make me such thy help afford,
That I may by my wits obtain
The special glory and the gain
Of winning, gathering such a heap,
That I shall pass and overleap
The richest Usurers of yore,
Who e'er for profit lent their store.

Unknown Author

Sanctificetur—

"I'm afraid
That ever ready is my maid
To steal my money, and to cheat;
But all in vain shall she entreat—
A mess of peas one month entire
Is all she'll cook upon the fire.
I spend too much, it makes me wroth;
Better by far to live on broth
Than thus to run my money through,
As all those fools are wont to do
Who will have venison in the dish,
And salted meats, and dainty fish.

Fiat voluntas tua—

"Yea,
That knight who paid me yesterday,
The one who owed me fifty pound,
Not yet has liberation found;
Nearly one-half he owes me yet—
He need not think that I forget.
What can I lose? His faith I have,
And urged, his word of honor gave
That in a month, without delay,
The whole remainder he would pay.
Yet in that case I scarce was wise:
These pledges are of little price.

Sicut in cœlo—

"To the Jews
These times enormous gain produce,

For universally they lend;
To them alone all people wend.
No blame their doings ever met—
Indeed, I mightily regret
My practise cannot be as theirs;
I would greatly better my affairs.

Et ne nos inducas—

"Last night
Much money that I took was light,
And even false coins were among.
To take by night is greatly wrong,
Money or pledge from any one
Unless a man of honor known.

In tentationem—

"Grain
I'm sure will higher price attain;
My garners I should fill, 'tis clear;
I know that living will be dear
After the feast of John is past,
This year far more than was the last.

Sed libera nos a malo—

"No worthy neighbor do I know;
Of none of them I profit make;
All hate me for my money's sake.
In God's name, is it their concern
What I by lending money earn?

Unknown Author

Amen—

"I turn my house to reach:
Our priest is going now to preach,
Money from out our purse to whisk;
But I believe there's little risk
That he'll catch mine in such a net—
His music is too falsely set."

François Rabelais

The Lost Hatchet

THERE once lived a poor honest country fellow of Gravot, Tom Wellhung by name, a wood-cleaver by trade, who in that low drudgery made shift so to pick up a sorry livelihood. It happened that he lost his hatchet. Now tell me who ever had more cause to be vexed than poor Tom? Alas, his whole estate and life depended on his hatchet; by his hatchet he earned many a fair penny of the best wood-mongers or log-merchants, among whom he went a-jobbing; for want of his hatchet he was like to starve; and had Death but met him six days after without a hatchet, the grim fiend would have mowed him down in the twinkling of a bed-staff. In this sad case he began to be in a heavy taking, and called upon Jupiter with most eloquent prayers (for, you know, necessity was the mother of eloquence), with the whites of his eyes turned up toward heaven, down on his marrow-bones, his arms reared high, his fingers stretched wide, and his head bare, the poor wretch without ceasing was roaring out by way of Litany at every repetition of his supplications, "My hatchet, Lord Jupiter, my hatchet, my hatchet, only my hatchet, oh, Jupiter, or money to buy another, and nothing else; alas, my poor hatchet!"

Jupiter happened then to be holding a grand council about certain urgent affairs, and old Gammer Cybele was just giving her opinion, or, if you had rather have it so, it was young Phœbus the Beau; but, in short, Tom's outcry and

lamentations were so loud that they were heard with no small amazement at the council-board by the whole consistory of the gods. "What a devil have we below," quoth Jupiter, "that howls so horridly? By the mud of Styx, haven't we had all along, and haven't we here still, enough to do to set to rights a world of puzzling businesses of consequence? Let us, however, despatch this howling fellow below; you, Mercury, go see who it is, and discover what he wants." Mercury looked out at heaven's trapdoor, through which, as I am told, they hear what's said here below. By the way, one might well enough mistake it for the scuttle of a ship; though Icaromenippus said it was like the mouth of a well. The light-heeled deity saw that it was honest Tom, who asked for his lost hatchet; and, accordingly, he made his report to the Synod. "Marry," said Jupiter, "we are finely holped up, as if we had now nothing else to do here but to restore lost hatchets. Well, he must have it for all that, for so 'tis written in the Book of Fate, as well as if it was worth the whole Duchy of Milan. The truth is, the fellow's hatchet is as much to him as a kingdom to a king. Come, come, let no more words be scattered about it; let him have his hatchet again. Run down immediately, and cast at the poor fellow's feet three hatchets! his own, another of gold, and a third of massy silver, all of one size; then, having left it to his will to take his choice, if he take his own, and be satisfied with it, give him t'other two. If he take another, chop his head off with his own; and henceforth serve me all those losers of hatchets after that manner."

Having said this, Jupiter, with an awkward turn of his head, like a jackanapes swallowing pills, made so dreadful a phiz that all the vast Olympus quaked again. Heaven's

foot-messenger, thanks to his low-crowned, narrow-brimmed hat, and plume of feathers, heel-pieces, and running-stick with pigeon-wings, flings himself out at heaven's wicket, through the empty deserts of the air, and in a trice nimbly alights on the earth, and throws at friend Tom's feet the three hatchets, saying to him: "Thou hast bawled long enough to be a-dry; thy prayers and requests are granted by Jupiter; see which of these three is thy hatchet, and take it away with thee."

Wellhung lifts up the golden hatchet, peeps upon it, and finds it very heavy; then staring on Mercury cries, "Gad-zooks, this is none of mine; I won't ha't." The same he did with the silver one, and said, "'Tis not this either; you may e'en take them again." At last, he takes up his own hatchet, examines the end of the helve, and finds his mark there; then, ravished with joy, like a fox that meets some straggling poultry, and sneering from the tip of the nose, he cries, "By the Mass, this is my hatchet; Master God, if you will leave it me, I will sacrifice to you a very good and huge pot of milk, brim full, covered with fine strawberries, next Ides, *i.e.*, the 15th of May."

"Honest fellow," said Mercury, "I leave it thee; take it; and because thou hast wished and chosen moderately, in point of hatchet, by Jupiter's command I give thee these two others; thou hast now wherewith to make thyself rich: be honest."

Honest Tom gave Mercury a whole cart-load of thanks, and paid reverence to the most great Jupiter. His old hatchet he fastened close to his leathern girdle, and girds it about his breech like Martin of Cambray; the two others, being more heavy, he lays on his shoulder. Thus he plods on, trudging over the fields, keeping a good countenance

among his neighbors and fellow-parishioners, with one merry saying or other, after Patelin's way.

The next day, having put on a clean white jacket, he takes on his back the two precious hatchets, and comes to Chinon, the famous city, noble city, ancient city, yea, the first city in the world, according to the judgment and assertion of the most learned Massoreths. In Chinon he turned his silver hatchet into fine testons, crown-pieces, and other white cash; his golden hatchet into fine angels, curious ducats, substantial ridders, spankers, and rose nobles. Then with them purchases a good number of farms, barns, houses, outhouses, thatch-houses, stables, meadows, orchards, fields, vineyards, woods, arable lands, pastures, ponds, mills, gardens, nurseries, oxen, cows, sheep, goats, swine, hogs, asses, horses, hens, cocks, capons, chickens, geese, ganders, ducks, drakes, and a world of all other necessaries, and in a short time became the richest man in all the country. His brother bumpkins, and the yeomen and other country-puts thereabout, perceiving his good fortune, were not a little amazed, insomuch that their former pity of poor Tom was soon changed into an envy of his so great and unexpected rise; and, as they could not for their souls devise how this came about, they made it their business to pry up and down, and lay their heads together, to inquire, seek, and inform themselves by what means, in what place, on what day, what hour, how, why, and wherefore, he had come by this great treasure.

At last, hearing it was by losing his hatchet, "Ha, ha!" said they, "was there no more to do, but to lose a hatchet, to make us rich?" With this they all fairly lost their hatchets out of hand. The devil a one that had a hatchet left; he was not his mother's son, that did not lose his

hatchet. No more was wood felled or cleared in that country through want of hatchets. Nay, the Æsopian apologue even saith, that certain petty country gents, of the lower class, who had sold Wellhung their little mill and little field, to have wherewithal to make a figure at the next muster, having been told that this treasure was come to him by that means only, sold the only badge of their gentility, their swords, to purchase hatchets to go to lose them, as the silly clodpates did, in hopes to gain store of coin by that loss.

You would have truly sworn they had been a parcel of your petty spiritual usurers, Rome-bound, selling their all, and borrowing of others to buy store of mandates, a pennyworth of a new-made pope.

Now they cried out and brayed, and prayed and bawled, and lamented and invoked Jupiter, "My hatchet! My hatchet! Jupiter, my hatchet!" On this side, "My hatchet!" On that side, "My hatchet! Ho, ho, ho, ho, Jupiter, my hatchet!" The air round about rung again with the cries and howlings of these rascally losers of hatchets.

Mercury was nimble in bringing them hatchets; to each offering that which he had lost, as also another of gold, and a third of silver.

Everywhere he still was for that of gold, giving thanks in abundance to the great giver Jupiter; but in the very nick of time, that they bowed and stooped to take it from the ground, whip in a trice, Mercury lopped off their heads, as Jupiter had commanded. And of heads thus cut off, the number was just equal to that of the lost hatchets.

—*"Gargantua and Pantagruel."*

François Rabelais

Prognostications

'Tis the oddest whimsy in the world to fancy there are stars for kings, popes, and great dons, any more than for the poor and needy. As if, forsooth, some new stars were made since the flood, or since Romulus or Pharamond, at the making somebody king; a thing that Triboulet or Caillette would have been ashamed to have said, and yet they were men of no common learning or fame; and for aught you or I know, this same Triboulet may have been of the kings of Castile's blood in Noah's ark, and Caillette of that of King Priam. Now, mark ye me, those odd notions come from nothing in the world but want of faith: I say, the true Catholic faith. Therefore, resting fully satisfied that the stars care not a fig more for kings than for beggars, nor a jot more for your rich, topping fellows than for the most sorry, mangy, lousy rascal, I'll e'en leave other addle-pated fortune-tellers to speak of the great folks, and I will only talk of the little ones.

And, in the first place, of those who are subject to Saturn; as, for example, such as lack the ready, jealous, or horn-mad, self-tormenting prigs, dreaming fops, crabbed eavesdroppers, raving, doting churls, hatchers and brooders of mischief, suspicious, distrustful slouches, mole-catchers, close-fisted, griping misers, usurers and pawnbrokers, Christian-Jews, pinch-crusts, hold-fasts, michers and penny-fathers; redeemers of dipped, mortgaged, and bleeding copy-holds and messuages, fleecers of sheared asses, shoe-makers and translators, tanners, bricklayers, bell-founders, compounders of loans, patchers, clouters, and botchers of old

trumpery stuff, and all moping melancholic folks, shall not have this year whatever they'd have; and will think more than once how they may get good store of the king's pictures into their clutches; in the mean time they'll hardly throw shoulders of mutton out at the windows, and will often scratch their working noddles where they do not itch.

As for those who are under Jupiter, as canting vermin, bigots, pardon-pedlers, voluminous abbreviators, scribblers of briefs, copyists, pope's bull-makers, dataries, pettifoggers, Capuchins, monks, hermits, hypocrites, cushion-thumping mountebanks, spiritual comedians, forms of holiness, paternoster faces, wheedling gabblers, wry-necked scoundrels, spoilers of paper, stately gulls, notched, crop-eared meacocks, public register's clerks, wafer-makers, rosary-makers, engrossers of deeds, notaries, grave-bubbles, protecoles, and prompters to speakers, deceitful makers of promises, shall fare according as they have money. So many clergymen will die, that there will not be enough found on whom their benefices may be conferred, so that many will hold two, three, four, or more. The tribe of hypocrites shall lose a good deal of its ancient fame, since the world is grown a rake, and will not be fooled much longer, as Avenzagel saith.

Those who are under Mars, as hangmen, cut-throats, dead-doing fellows, free-booters, hedge-birds, footpads, and highwaymen, catch-poles, bum-bailiffs, beadles and watchmen, reformadoes, tooth-drawers and corn-cutters, pintlesmiths, shavers and frig-beards, butchers, coiners, paltry quacks and mountebanks, renegadoes, apostates and marranized miscreants, incendiaries, chimney-sweepers, boorish cluster-fists, charcoal-men, alchemists, merchants of eel-skins and egg-shells, gridiron and rattle-makers, cooks,

paltry pedlers, trash-mongers and spangle-makers, bracelet-makers, lantern-makers and tinkers, this year will do fine things; but some of them will be somewhat subject to be rib-roasted, and have a St. Andrew's cross scored over their jobbernols at unawares. This year one of those worthy persons will go nigh to be made a field-bishop, and, mounted on a horse that was foaled of an acorn, give the passengers a blessing with his legs.

Those who belong to Sol, as topers, quaffers, whipcans, tosspots, whittled, mellow, cup-shotten swillers, merry-Greeks with crimson snouts of their own dyeing; fat, pursy gorbellies, brewers of wine and of beer, bottlers of hay, porters, mowers, menders of tiled, slated, and thatched houses, burden-bearers, patchers, shepherds, ox-keepers, and cow-herds, swine-herds, and hog-drivers, fowlers and bird-catchers, gardeners, barn-keepers, hedgers, common mumpers and vagabonds, day-laborers, scourers of greasy thrum-caps, stuffers and bum-basters of pack-saddles, rag-merchants, idle lusks, and drowsy loiterers, smell-feasts, and snap-gobbets, gentlemen generally wearing shirts with neck-bands, or heartily desiring to wear such; all these will be hale and sharp-set, and not troubled with the gout at the grinders, or a stoppage at the gullet, when at a feast on free-cost.

Those whom Venus is said to rule will be famous this year. But when the sun enters Cancer and other signs, let them beware.

As for those who come under Mercury, as sharpers, rooks, cozeners, setters, as sharks, cheats, pickpockets, divers, thieves, millers, night-walkers, masters of arts, decretists, picklocks, deer-stealers, hedge-rimers, composers of serious doggerel meter, merry-andrews, jack-puddings, tumblers,

masters in the art of hocus-pocus, legerdemain, and powder of prelinpinpin; such as break Priscian's head, quibblers and punsters, stationers, paper-makers, card-makers, and pirates, will strive to appear more merry than they'll often be; sometimes they'll laugh without any cause, and will be pretty apt to be blown up and march off, if they find themselves better stored with chink than they should be.

Those who belong to Madam Luna, as hawkers of almanacs and pamphlets, huntsmen, ostrich-catchers, falconers, couriers, salt-carriers, lunatics, maggotty fools, crack-brained coxcombs, addle-pated frantic wights, giddy, whimsical foplings, exchange-brokers, post-boys, foot-boys, tennis-court-keepers' boys, glass-mongers, light-horse, watermen, mariners, messengers, rakers, and gleaners will not long stay in a place this year. However, so many swag-bellies and puff-bags will hardly go to St. Hiacco as there did in the year 524. Great numbers of pilgrims will come down from the mountains of Savoy and Auvergne, but Sagittarius sorely threatens them with kibed heels.

—*"Gargantua and Pantagruel."*

Lending and Borrowing

Be ever indebted to somebody or other, that there may be somebody always to pray for you, that the Giver of all good things may grant unto you a blessed, long, and prosperous life; fearing if Fortune should deal crossly with you, that it might be his chance to come short of being paid by you; he will always speak good of you in every company, ever and anon purchase new creditors unto you; to the end

that through their means you may make a shift by borrowing from Peter to pay Paul, and with other folks' earth fill up his ditch. When of old, in the region of the Gauls, by the institution of the Druids, the servants, slaves, and bondmen were burnt alive at the funerals and obsequies of their lords and masters, had not they fear enough, think you, that their lords and masters should die? For, perforce, they were to die with them for company. Did not they incessantly send up their supplications to their great god Mercury, as likewise unto Dis, the father of wealth, to lengthen out their days, and preserve them long in health? Were not they very careful to entertain them well, punctually to look unto them, and to attend them faithfully and circumspectly? For by those means were they to live together, at least until the hour of death. Believe me, your creditors with a more fervent devotion will beseech Almighty God to prolong your life, they being of nothing more afraid than that you should die; for that they are more concerned for the sleeve than the arm, and love the penny better than their own lives; as it evidently appeareth by the usurers of Landerousse, who not long since hanged themselves because the price of the corn and wines was fallen, by the return of a gracious season.

Truly, and in good sooth, when I ponder my destiny aright, and think well upon it, you put me shrewdly to my plunges, and have me at a bay in twitting me with the reproach of my debts, and creditors; and yet did I, in this only respect and consideration of being a debtor, esteem myself worshipful, reverend, and formidable. For, against the opinion of most philosophers, that of nothing ariseth nothing; yet without having bottomed on so much as that which is called the first matter, did I out of nothing become such a maker and creator, that I have created, what? a gay number of fair and

jolly creditors. Nay, creditors (I will maintain it, even to the very fire itself exclusively) are fair and goodly creatures. Who lendeth nothing is an ugly and wicked creature, and an accursed imp of the infernal Old Nick. And there is made, what? Debts: a thing most precious and dainty, of great use and antiquity. Debts, I say, surmounting the number of syllables which may result from the combination of all the consonants with each of the vowels heretofore projected, reckoned and calculated by the noble Xenocrates. To judge of the perfection of debtors by the numerosity of their creditors is the readiest way for entering into the mysteries of practical arithmetic.

You can hardly imagine how glad I am when, every morning, I perceive myself environed and surrounded with brigades of creditors, humble, fawning, and full of their reverences. And while I remark that as I look more favorably upon, and give a cheerful countenance to one than another, the fellow thereupon buildeth a conceit that he shall be the first despatched, and the foremost in the date of payment; and he valueth my smiles at the rate of ready money. It seemeth unto me that I then act and personate the God of the Passion of Saumure, accompanied with his angels and cherubim.

These are my flatterers, my soothers, my clawbacks, my smoothers, my parasites, my saluters, my givers of good-morrows, and perpetual orators, which makes me verily think that the supremest height of heroic virtue, described by Hesiod, consisteth in being a debtor, wherein I held the first degree in my commencement. Which dignity, though all human creatures seem to aim at, and aspire thereto, few, nevertheless, because of the difficulties in the way, and encumbrances of hard passages, are able to reach it, as is easily perceivable by the ardent desire and vehement longing, harbored in the

breast of every one, to be still creating more debts and new creditors.

Yet doth it not lie in the power of every one to be a debtor. To acquire creditors is not at the disposure of each man's arbitrament. You nevertheless would deprive me of this sublime felicity. You ask me when I shall be out of debt.

Well, to go yet farther on, and possibly worse in your conceit, may St. Bablin, the good saint, snatch me, if I have not, all my lifetime, held debt to be as an union or conjunction of the heavens with the earth, and the whole cement whereby the race of mankind is kept together; yea, of such virtue and efficacy that, I say, the whole progeny of Adam would very suddenly perish without it. Therefore, perhaps, I do not think amiss when I repute it to be the great Soul of the Universe, which (according to the opinion of the Academics) vivified all manner of things. In confirmation whereof, that you may the better believe it to be so, represent unto yourself, without any prejudice of spirit, in a clear and serene fancy, the idea and form of some other world than this; take, if you please, and lay hold on the thirtieth of those which the philosopher Metrodorus did enumerate, wherein it is to be supposed there is no debtor or creditor, that is to say, a world without debts. There among the planets will be no regular course. All will be in disorder. Jupiter, reckoning himself to be nothing indebted unto Saturn, will go near to detrude him out of his sphere, and with the Homeric chain will be like to hang up all the intelligences, gods, heavens, demons, heroes, devils, earth, and sea, together with the other elements. Saturn, no doubt, combining with Mars, will reduce the world into a chaos of confusion.

Mercury then would be no more subjected to the other

planets; he would scorn to be any longer their Camillus, as he was of old termed in the Hetrurian tongue; for it is to be imagined that he is no way a debtor to them. Venus will no more be venerable, because she shall have lent nothing. The moon will remain bloody and obscure: For to what end should the sun impart unto her any of his light? He owed her nothing. Nor yet will the sun shine upon the earth, nor the stars send down any good influence, because the terrestrial globe hath desisted from sending up their wonted nourishment by vapors and exhalations, wherewith Heraclitus maintained they were cherished and alimented. There would likewise be in such a world no manner of symbolization, alternation, nor transmutation among the elements; for the one will not esteem itself obliged to the other, as having borrowed nothing at all from it. Earth then will not become water, water will not be changed into air, of air will be made no fire, and fire will afford no heat unto the earth; the earth will produce nothing but monsters, Titans, giants; no rain will descend upon it, nor light shine thereon; no wind will blow there, nor will there be in it any summer or autumn. Lucifer will break loose, and issuing forth of the depth of hell, accompanied with his furies, fiends, and horned devils, will go about to unnestle and drive out of heaven all the gods, as well of the greater as of the lesser nations. Such a world without lending will be no better than a dog-kennel, a place of contention and wrangling, more unruly and irregular than that of the Rector of Paris; a devil of an hurly-burly, and more disordered confusion than that of the plays of Douay. Men will not then salute one another; it will be but lost labor to expect aid or succor from any, or to cry fire, water, murder, for none will put to their helping hand. Why? He lent no money; there is nothing due to him.

Nobody is concerned in his burning, in his shipwreck, in his ruin, or in his death; and that because he hitherto had lent nothing, and would never thereafter have lent anything. In short, Faith, Hope, and Charity would be quite banished from such a world; for men are born to relieve and assist one another; and in their stead would succeed and be introduced defiance, disdain, and rancor, with the most execrable troop of all evils, all imprecations, and all miseries. Whereupon you will think, and that not amiss, that Pandora had there split her unlucky box. Men unto men will be wolves, hob-thrushers, and goblins (as were Lycaon, Bellerophon, Nebuchadnezzar), plunderers, highway-robbers, cut-throats, rapparees, murderers, poisoners, assassinators, lewd, wicked, malevolent, pernicious haters, set against everybody, like to Ismael, Metabus, or Timon the Athenian, who for that cause was named Misanthropos; in such sort, that it would prove much more easy in nature to have fish entertained in the air, and bullocks fed in the bottom of the ocean, than to support or tolerate a rascally rabble of people that will not lend. These fellows (I vow) do I hate with a perfect hatred; and if conformable to the pattern of this grievous, peevish, and perverse world which lendeth nothing, you figure and liken the little world, which is man, you will find in him a terrible jostling coyle and clutter: The head will not lend the sight of his eyes to guide the feet and hands; the legs will refuse to bear up the body; the hands will leave off working any more for the rest of the members; the heart will be weary of its continual motion for the beating of the pulse, and will no longer lend his assistance; the lungs will withdraw the use of their bellows; the liver will desist from conveying any more blood through the veins for the good of the whole; the bladder will not be indebted to the kidneys. The brains, in

the interim, considering this unnatural course, will fall into a raving dotage, and withhold all feeling from the sinews, and motion from the muscles. Briefly, in such a world, without order and array, owing nothing, lending nothing, and borrowing nothing, you would see a more dangerous conspiration than that which Æsop exposed in his apologue. Such a world will perish undoubtedly; and not only perish, but perish very quickly. Were it Æsculapius himself, his body would immediately rot, and the chafing soul, full of indignation, take its flight to all the devils of hell after my money.

On the contrary, be pleased to represent unto your fancy another world, wherein every one lendeth, and every one oweth, all are debtors, and all creditors. Oh, how great will that harmony be, which shall thereby result from the regular motions of the heavens! Methinks I hear it every whit as well as Plato did. What sympathy there will be among the elements! Oh, how delectable then unto nature will be our own works and productions! While Ceres appeareth laden with corn, Bacchus with wines, Flora with flowers, Pomona with fruits, and Juno fair in a clear air, wholesome and pleasant—I lose myself in this high contemplation.

Then will among the race of mankind, peace, love, benevolence, fidelity, tranquillity, rest, banquets, feastings, joy, gladness, gold, silver, single money, chains, rings, with other ware, and chaffer of that nature be found to trot from hand to hand; no suits at law, no wars, no strife, debate, nor wrangling; none will be there an usurer, none will be there a pinch-penny, a scrape-good wretch, or churlish, hard-hearted refuser. Good God! Will this not be the golden age in the reign of Saturn? The true idea of the Olympic regions wherein, all other virtues ceasing, Charity alone ruleth, gov-

erneth, domineereth, and triumpheth? 'All will be fair and goodly people there, all just and virtuous.

Happy world! Oh, people of that world most happy! Yea, thrice and four times blessed is that people! I think in very deed that I am among them, and swear to you, by my good, forsooth, that if this glorious aforesaid world had a pope, abounding with cardinals, that so he might have the association of a sacred college, in the space of a very few years you should be sure to see the saints much thicker in the roll, more numerous wonder-working and mirific, more services, more vows, more staff-bearers, more wax candles than are all those in the nine bishoprics of Brittany, St. Yves only excepted.

Now let our microcosm be fancied conformable to this model in all its members: lending, borrowing, and owing (that is to say), according to its own nature. For Nature hath not to any other end created man, but to borrow and lend.—*"Gargantua and Pantagruel."*

Concerning Diogenes and Drink

Good people, most illustrious drinkers, and you thrice precious gouty gentlemen—did you ever see Diogenes the cynic philosopher? If you have seen him, you then had your eyes in your head, or I am very much out of my understanding and logical sense. It is a gallant thing to see the clearness of wine, of gold, of the sun. I'll be judged by the blind-born, so renowned in the sacred Scriptures, who, having at his choice to ask whatever he would from Him Who is Almighty,

and Whose word in an instant is effectually performed, asked nothing else but that he might see.

If you have not seen him—as I am easily induced to believe that you have not—at least you have heard some talk of him. If you have not heard of him, I will presently tell you a story to make your wine relish. Drink, then; and so to the purpose. Harken, now, while I give you notice—to the end that you may not, like infidels, be by your simplicity abused—that in his time he was a rare philosopher, and the cheerfullest of a thousand. If he had some imperfection, so have you, so have we; for there is nothing but God that is perfect. Yet so it was, that by Alexander the Great, although he had Aristotle for his instructor and domestic, was he held in such estimation, that he wished, if he had not been Alexander, to have been Diogenes the Sinopian.

When Philip, King of Macedon, enterprised the siege and ruin of Corinth, the Corinthians, having received certain intelligence by their spies that he with a numerous army in battle array was coming against them, were all of them, not without cause, most terribly afraid; and therefore were not neglective of their duty in doing their best endeavors to put themselves in a fit posture to resist his hostile approach and defend their own city.

Some from the fields brought into the fortified places their movables, cattle, corn, wine, fruit, victuals, and other necessary provision.

Others did fortify and rampart their walls, set up little fortresses, bastions, squared ravelins, digged trenches, cleansed countermines, fenced themselves with gabions, contrived platforms, emptied casemates, barricaded the false brays, erected the cavaliers, repaired the counterscarps, plastered the curtains, lengthened ravelins, stopped para-

pets, mortised barbicans, new-pointed the portcullises, fastened the herses, sarasinesks, and cataracts, placed their sentries, and doubled their patrol. Every one did watch and ward, and none was exempted from carrying the basket. Some polished corslets, varnished backs and breasts, cleaned the head-pieces, mail-coats, brigandines, sallets, helmets, morions, jacks, gushets, gorgets, hoguines, brassards, and cuissards, corslets, haubergeons, shields, bucklers, targets, greves, gantlets, and spurs. Others made ready bows, slings, crossbows, pellets, catapults, migraines or fire-balls, fire-brands, balists, scorpions, and other such warlike engines, expugnatory, and destructive to the helepolides. They sharpened and prepared spears, staves, pikes, brown bills, halberds, long hooks, lances, zagayes, quarterstaves, eel-spears, partizans, troutstaves, clubs, battle-axes, maces, darts, dartlets, glaves, javelins, javelots, and truncheons. They set edges upon simitars, cutlases, badelaire, back-swords, tucks, rapiers, bayonets, arrow-heads, dags, daggers, mandousians, poniards, whynyards, knives, skeans, sables, chippin knives, and raillons.

Every man exercised his weapon, every man scoured off the rust from his natural hanger. Nor was there a woman among them, though never so reserved, or old, who made not her harness to be well furbished. As you know, the Corinthian women of old were reputed very courageous combatants.

Diogenes, seeing them all so warm at work, and himself not employed by the magistrates in any business whatsoever, he did very seriously, for many days together, without speaking one word, consider, and contemplate the countenances of his fellow citizens.

Then, on a sudden, as if he had been roused up and

inspired by a martial spirit, he girded his cloak, scarf-wise, about his left arm, tucked up his sleeves to the elbow, trussed himself like a clown gathering apples, and, giving to one of his old acquaintance his wallet, books, and opistographs, away went he out of town toward a little hill or promontory of Corinth, called Craneum, and there on the strand, a pretty level place, did he roll his jolly tub, which served him for a house to shelter him from the injuries of the weather. There, I say, in great vehemency of spirit, did he turn it, veer it, wheel it, frisk it, jumble it, shuffle it, huddle it, tumble it, hurry it, jolt it, jostle it, overthrow it, evert it, invert it, subvert it, overturn it, beat it, thwack it, bump it, batter it, knock it, thrust it, push it, jerk it, shock it, shake it, toss it, throw it, overthrow it, upside down, topsyturvy, tread it, trample it, stamp it, tap it, ting it, ring it, tingle it, towl it, sound it, resound it, stop it, shut it, unbung it, close it, unstopple it. And then again in a mighty bustle he mounted it, broached it, nicked it, notched it, bespattered it, decked it, adorned it, trimmed it, garnished it, gaged it, furnished it, bored it, pierced it, trapped it, rumbled it, slid it down the hill, and precipitated it from the very height of the Craneum. Then from the foot to the top (like another Sisyphus with his stone), he bore it up again and every way so banged it and belabored it, that it was ten thousand to one he had not struck the bottom of it out.

Which, when one of his friends had seen, and asked him why he did so toil his body, perplex his spirit, and torment his tub, the philosopher's answer was, "That, not being employed in any other charge by the Republic, he thought it expedient to thunder and storm it so tempestuously upon his tub, that, among a people so fervently busy, and earnest

at work, he alone might not seem a loitering slug and lazy fellow." To the same purpose may I say of myself,

"Though I be rid from fear,
I am not void of care."

For perceiving no account to be made of me toward the discharge of a trust of any great concernment, and considering that through all the parts of this most noble kingdom of France, both on this and on the other side of the mountains, every one is most diligently exercised and busied, some in the fortifying of their own native country, for its defense, others in the repulsing of their enemies by an offensive war; and all this with a policy so excellent, and such admirable order, so manifestly profitable for the future, whereby France shall have its frontiers most magnificently enlarged, and the French assured of a long and well-grounded peace, that very little withholds me from the opinion of good Heraclitus, which affirmeth war to be the father of all good things. And therefore do I believe that war is in Latin called *bellum,* and not by antiphrasis, as some patchers of old rusty Latin would have us to think, because in war there is little beauty to be seen; but absolutely and simply, for that in war appereth all that is good and graceful, and that by the wars is purged out all manner of wickedness and deformity. For proof whereof the wise and pacific Solomon could no better represent the unspeakable perfection of the divine wisdom, than by comparing it to the due disposure and ranking of an army in battle array, well provided and ordered.

Therefore, by reason of my weakness and inability, being reputed by my compatriots unfit for the offensive part of warfare; and, on the other side, being no way employed in matter of the defensive, although it had been but to carry

burdens, fill ditches, or break clods, either whereof had been to me indifferent—therefore, I held it not a little disgraceful to be only an idle spectator of so many valorous, eloquent, and warlike persons who, in the view and sight of all Europe, act this notable interlude or tragi-comedy, and not exert myself, and contribute thereto this nothing, my all, which remained for me to do. In my opinion, little honor is due to such as are mere lookers-on, liberal of their eyes, and of their strength parsimonious, who conceal their crowns and hide their silver. Having made this choice and election, it seemed to me that my exercise therein would be neither unprofitable nor troublesome to any, while I should thus set a-going my Diogenical tub, which is all that is left me safe from the shipwreck of my former misfortunes.

At this dingle-dangle wagging of my tub, what would you have me to do? I know not as yet. Stay a little, till I suck up a draft of this bottle; it is my true and only Helicon; it is my Caballine Fountain; it is my sole enthusiasm. Drinking thus, I meditate, discourse, resolve, and conclude. After that the epilogue is made, I laugh, I write, I compose, and drink again. Ennius drinking wrote, and writing drank. Æschylus, if Plutarch in his Symposiacs merit any faith, drank composing, and drinking composed. Homer never wrote fasting, and Cato never wrote till after he had drunk. These passages I have brought before you, to the end you may not say that I live without the example of men well praised and better prized.

Since then my luck or destiny is such as you have heard —for it is not for everybody to go to Corinth—I am fully resolved to be so little idle and unprofitable, that I will set myself to serve the one and the other sort of people. Among the diggers, pioneers, and rampart-builders, I will do as did

Neptune and Apollo at Troy, under Laomedon, or as did Renault of Montauban in his latter days. I will serve the masons; I will set on the pot to boil for the bricklayers; and, while the minced meat is making ready at the sound of my small pipe, I will measure the muzzle of the musing dotards. Thus did Amphion with the melody of his harp found, build, and finish the great and renowned city of Thebes.

For the use of the warriors I am about to broach off a new barrel to give them a taste—which by two former volumes of mine, if by the deceitfulness and falsehood of printers they had not been jumbled, marred, and spoiled, you would have very well relished—and draw unto them a jolly, cheerful quart of Pantagruelian sentences, which you may lawfully call, if you please, Diogenical; and shall have me, seeing I cannot be their fellow soldier, for their faithful butler, refreshing and cheering, according to my little power, their return from the alarms of the enemy; as also for an indefatigable extoller of their martial exploits and glorious achievements.

I remember, nevertheless, to have read that Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, one day among the many spoils and booties which by his victories he had acquired, presented to the Egyptians, in the open view of the people, a Bactrian camel all black, and a party-colored slave, in such sort, as that the one half of his body was black, and the other white, not in partition of breadth by the diaphragm, as was that woman consecrated to the Indian Venus, whom the Thyanean philosopher did see between the river Hydaspes and Mount Caucasus, but in a perpendicular dimension of altitude; which were things never before that seen in Egypt. He expected by the show of these novelties to win the love of the people. But what happened thereupon? At the pro-

duction of the camel they were all affrighted, and offended at the sight of the party-colored man—some scoffed at him as a detestable monster brought forth by the error of Nature—in a word, of the hope which he had to please these Egyptians, and by such means to increase the affection which they naturally bore him, he was altogether frustrated and disappointed; understanding fully, by their deportments, that they took more pleasure and delight in things that were proper, handsome, and perfect, than in misshapen, monstrous, and ridiculous creatures. Since which time he had both the slave and the camel in such dislike, that very shortly thereafter, either through negligence or for want of ordinary sustenance, they both tipped over the perch.

This example putteth me in a suspense between hope and fear, misdoubting that, for the contentment which I aim at, I shall but reap what will be most distasteful to me. My cake will be dough; instead of serving them, I shall but vex them, and offend those whom I purpose to exhilarate; resembling, in this dubious adventure, Euclion's cock, so renowned by Plautus in his Pot, and by Ausonius in his Griphon, and by divers others; which cock, for having by his scraping discovered a treasure, had his hide well curried. Put the case I get no anger by it, though formerly such things fell out, and the like may occur again—yet, by Hercules, it will not. For I perceive in them all, one and the same specifical form, and the like individual proprieties, which our ancestors called Pantagruelism; by virtue whereof they will bear with anything that floweth from a good, free, and loyal heart. I have seen them ordinarily take good-will in part of payment, and remain satisfied therewith, when one was not able to do better. Having despatched this point, I return to my barrel.

Up, my lads, to this wine, spare it not! Drink, boys, and troll it off at full bowls! If you do not think it good, let it alone. I am not like those officious and importunate sots, who by force, outrage, and violence, constrain an easy, good-natured fellow to whiffle, quaff, carouse, and what is worse. All honest tipplers, all honest gouty men, all such as are a-dry, coming to this little barrel of mine, need not drink thereof, if it please them not. But if they have a mind to it, and that the wine prove agreeable to the tastes of their worshipful worships, let them drink, frankly, freely, and boldly, without paying anything, and welcome. This is my decree, my statute, and ordinance. And let none fear there shall be any want of wine, for how much soever you shall draw forth at the faucet, so much shall I tun in at the bung. Thus shall the barrel remain inexhaustible; it hath a lively spring and perpetual current. Such was the beverage contained within the cup of Tantalus, which was figuratively represented among the Brachman sages. Such was in Iberia the mountain of salt, so highly written of by Cato. Such was the branch of gold consecrated to the subterranean goddess, which Vergil treats of so sublimely. It is a true cornucopia of merriment and raillery. If at any time it seem to you to be emptied to the very lees, yet shall it not for all that be drawn wholly dry. Good hope remains there at the bottom, as in Pandora's box; and not despair, as in the leaky tubs of the Danaids. Remark well what I have said, and what manner of people they be whom I do invite; for, to the end that none be deceived, I, in imitation of Lucilius, who did protest that he wrote only to his own Tarentines and Consentines, have not pierced this vessel for any else but you, honest men, who are drinkers of the first edition, and gouty blades of the highest degree. The

confess that this circumstance caused me some emotion. But amid so many different objects which at the same time struck my sight, there was one which for some moments relieved me of fear and touched me with true pleasure, and that was, that, desiring to look toward Piedmont to see what was going on there, I saw you at Lyons as you were passing the Saône. At least, I saw upon the water a great light and many rays about the most beautiful countenance in the world. I could not well discern who was with you, for at that moment my head was below, and I believe that you did not see me, for you were looking in a different direction. I made a sign to you as best I could, but when you began to raise your eyes I fell back, and the peak of one of the mountains of Tartary prevented your seeing me. When I came down, I wished to tell the company that I had news of you, and to assure them that I had seen you, but they began to laugh as if I had made an incredible statement, and made me fly higher than before. Then happened a strange accident, and one that would seem impossible to whoever had not seen it. Once, when they had pitched me very high, I found myself in coming down again in a cloud, which, being very dense and I being extremely light, kept me afloat for a good while without falling, so that they waited long below, holding the blanket open, gazing upward, and unable to imagine what had become of me. Fortunately, there was no wind at all. Had there been any, the driving cloud would have carried me to one side or the other, and I would have fallen to the earth, hardly without considerable injury to myself. But a more dangerous accident succeeded this. The last time that they threw me into the air, I found myself in the midst of a flock of cranes, who were at first very much astonished at seeing me so high; but when they had approached me more closely, they took me for one

of that race of pygmies with whom, as you well know, mademoiselle, they have long waged war, and thought that I had come to spy on them even in the middle regions of the air. They immediately fell upon me with their beaks, and that so violently that I believed myself pierced by a hundred daggers; and one of them, who had me by the leg, pursued me so doggedly that she did not leave me until I had arrived in the blanket. This circumstance made my tormenters fear to put me again at the mercy of my foes, who had assembled in great numbers and floated above, waiting me to be tossed to them again. And so I was carried to my lodging in the same blanket, as bruised as it is well possible to be. You may judge for yourself, mademoiselle, how tyrannical an action that was, and by how many reasons you are obliged to disapprove it; and, to tell the truth, it behooves you especially, who were born with so many qualities of command, to accustom yourself early to hate injustice, and to take those who suffer it under your protection. I therefore beseech you, mademoiselle, to take the first opportunity of declaring that procedure as an attack which you disavow all part in, and that, for reparation to my honor, you order a grand gauze pavilion to be erected in the blue chamber of the Hôtel Rambouillet, where I may be served and magnificently entertained for a week by the two young ladies who caused me this misfortune; that confections be hourly brought to this room; that one of the ladies blow the fire, and that the other do nothing but pour sirup on plates to be frozen, and serve me with it from time to time. Thus, mademoiselle, you will perform a just action, and one worthy of so great and lovely a princess as you are; and I shall feel myself bound to be with more respect and sincerity than any one in the world, mademoiselle, yours, etc.—"*Letters.*"

On Sending Some Lions of Red Wax

MADEMOISELLE, this lion has been forced for reasons of state to migrate from Lybia with his whole family and a number of his friends, and I am of the opinion that there is no place in the world whither he could retire with more dignity than to your care, and that, in fact, his misfortune will in a way have been happy for him, since it gives him the opportunity of knowing so rare a person. He is descended in direct line from a famous lion who, three centuries ago, reigned on the Caucasus mountains, and one of whose grandsons is thought to have been the first lion ever brought to Europe. The honor which he will have of belonging to you makes me hope that you will show him more kindness and mercy than is your custom, and I believe that you will not consider it unworthy of yourself to become a refuge of afflicted lions. It will serve to increase your reputation in the whole of Barbary, where you are even now esteemed beyond anything else that is over-seas, and where no day passes but one hears some one praise your actions. If you would teach these lions how they may conceal themselves in human form, you would do them an especial favor, for in this way they would be able to do more evil, and to do it with greater impunity. But, should you desire to guard this secret, you would still be sufficiently kind to them by permitting them to be near you and helping them with your advice. I assure you, mademoiselle, that they are considered the most cruel and ferocious in the whole country, and I hope that you will be very happy with them. Among them are several cubs who, because of their tender age, can strangle only

sheep and children; but I believe that in time they, too, will become folk of some ability and attain to the virtues of their fathers. This, at least, I know, that they will see nothing about you to soften or subdue their hearts, and that they will be as well fed as in the densest forest of Africa. With this hope, and the assurance I have of your inability to be wanting to yourself in generosity, I thank you in advance for the hospitality which you will offer them, and assure you that I am, mademoiselle, your very humble and obedient servant.—"*Letters.*"

Cyrano de Bergerac

The Soul of the Cabbage

We laid ourselves along upon very soft quilts, covered with large carpets; and a young man that waited on us, taking the oldest of our philosophers, led him into a little parlor apart, where my Spirit called to him to come back to us as soon as he had supped.

This humor of eating separately gave me the curiosity of asking the cause of it. "He'll not relish," said he, "the steam of meat, nor yet of herbs, unless they die of themselves, because he thinks they are sensible of pain." "I wonder not so much," replied I, "that he abstains from flesh, and all things that have had a sensitive life. For in our world the Pythagoreans, and even some holy Anchorites, have followed that rule; but not to dare, for instance, cut a cabbage, for fear of hurting it—that seems to me altogether ridiculous." "And for my part," answered my Spirit, "I find a great deal of reason in his opinion.

"For, tell me, is not that cabbage you speak of a being existent in Nature as well as you? Is not she the common mother of you both? Yet the opinion that Nature is kinder to mankind than to cabbage-kind, tickles and makes us laugh. But, seeing she is incapable of passion, she can neither love nor hate anything; and were she susceptible of love, she would rather bestow her affection upon this cabbage, which you grant cannot offend her, than upon that man who would destroy her if it lay in his power.

"And, moreover, man cannot be born innocent, being a part of the first offender. But we know very well that the

first cabbage did not offend its Creator. If it be said that we are made after the image of the Supreme Being, and the cabbage is not—grant that to be true; yet by polluting our soul, wherein we resembled Him, we have effaced that likeness, seeing nothing is more contrary to God than sin. If, then, our soul be no longer His image, we resemble Him no more in our feet, hands, mouth, forehead, and ears, than a cabbage in its leaves, flowers, stalk, pith, and head—do not you really think that if this poor plant could speak when one cuts it, it would not say, 'Dear brother man, what have I done to thee that deserves death? I never grow but in gardens, and am never to be found in desert places, where I might live in security; I disdain all other company but thine, and scarcely am I sowed in thy garden when, to show thee my good-will, I blossom, stretch out my arms to thee, offer thee my children in grain; and, as a requital for my civility, thou causest my head to be chopped off.' Thus would a cabbage discourse if it could speak.

"To massacre a man is not so great sin as to cut and kill a cabbage, because one day the man will rise again, but the cabbage has no other life to hope for. By putting to death a cabbage, you annihilate it; but in killing a man, you make him only change his habitation. Nay, I'll go farther with you still: since God doth equally cherish all His works, and hath equally divided the benefits betwixt us and plants, it is but just we should have an equal esteem for them as for ourselves. It is true we were born first, but in the family of God there is no birthright. If, then, the cabbage share not with us in the inheritance of immortality, without doubt that want was made up by some other advantage, that may make amends for the shortness of its being—maybe by an universal intellect, or a perfect knowledge of all things in their

causes. And it is for that reason that the wise Mover of all things hath not shaped for it organs like ours, which are proper only for simple reasoning, not only weak, but often fallacious too; but others, more ingeniously framed, stronger, and more numerous, which serve to conduct its speculative exercises. You'll ask me, perhaps, whenever any cabbage imparted those lofty conceptions to us? But tell me, again, who ever discovered to us certain beings, which we allow to be above us, to whom we bear no analogy nor proportion, and whose existence it is as hard for us to comprehend as the understanding and ways whereby a cabbage expresses itself to its like, though not to us, because our senses are too dull to penetrate so far?

"Moses, the greatest of philosophers, who drew the knowledge of nature from the fountain-head, Nature herself, hinted this truth to us when he spoke of the Tree of Knowledge; and without doubt he intended to intimate to us under that figure that plants, in exclusion of mankind, possess perfect philosophy. Remember, then, oh, thou proudest of animals, that though a cabbage which thou cuttest sayeth not a word, yet it pays in thinking. But the poor vegetable has no fit organs to howl as you do, nor yet to frisk about and weep. Yet it hath those that are proper to complain of the wrong you do it, and to draw a judgment from Heaven upon you for the injustice. But if you still demand of me how I come to know that cabbages and coleworts conceive such pretty thoughts, then will I ask you, how come you to know that they do not; and how that some among them, when they shut up at night, may not compliment one another as you do, saying, 'Good-night, Master *Cole-Curled-Pate!* Your most humble servant, good Master *Cabbage-Round-Head!*'"

—"*Voyage to the Moon.*"

J. B. Poquelin—"Molière"

A Language Lesson

PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY *and* M. JOURDAIN.

Prof. Phil. Now for our lesson. What do you wish to learn?

M. Jour. Everything I can, for I have the greatest desire in the world to be accomplished; and it vexes me more than I can say that my father and mother did not make me learn all the sciences thoroughly when I was young.

Prof. Phil. That is a praiseworthy feeling. *Nam sine doctrina vita est quasi mortis imago.* You understand this, as you have, no doubt, a knowledge of Latin?

M. Jour. Yes; but I act as if I had none. Explain the meaning of it to me.

Prof. Phil. The meaning of it is that, *without science, life is an image of death.*

M. Jour. That Latin is quite right.

Prof. Phil. Do you know any of the principles, any of the rudiments of science?

M. Jour. Oh, yes; I can read and write.

Prof. Phil. With what would you like to begin? Shall I teach you logic?

M. Jour. And what may this logic be?

Prof. Phil. It teaches us the three operations of the mind.

M. Jour. What are they, these three operations of the mind?

Prof. Phil. The first, the second, and the third. The first is to conceive well by means of universals; the second, to

judge well by means of categories; and the third, to draw a conclusion aright by means of the figures *Barbara, Celarent, Darii, Ferio, Baralipton,* etc.

M. Jour. Pooh! what ugly words. This logic does not suit me in the least. Teach me something more cheerful.

Prof. Phil. Would you like to learn moral philosophy?

M. Jour. Moral philosophy?

Prof. Phil. Yes.

M. Jour. What does it say, this moral philosophy?

Prof. Phil. It treats of happiness, teaches men to moderate their passions, and——

M. Jour. No, none of that. I am devilishly hot-tempered, and, morality or no morality, I like to give full vent to my anger whenever I have a mind to it.

Prof. Phil. Would you like to learn physics?

M. Jour. And what have physics to say for themselves?

Prof. Phil. Physics are that science which explains the principles of natural things and the properties of bodies, which discourses of the nature of the elements, of metals, minerals, stones, plants, and animals; which teaches us the cause of all the meteors, the rainbow, the *ignis fatuus,* comets, lightning, thunder, thunderbolts, rain, snow, hail, wind, and whirlwinds.

M. Jour. There is too much hullabaloo in all that; too much riot and rumpus.

Prof. Phil. What would you have me teach you then?

M. Jour. Teach me spelling.

Prof. Phil. Very good.

M. Jour. Afterward you will teach me the almanac, so that I may know when there is a moon, and when there isn't one.

Prof. Phil. Be it so. In order to give a right interpre-

tation to your thought, and to treat this matter philosophically, we must begin, according to the order of things, with an exact knowledge of the nature of the letters, and the different way in which each is pronounced. And on this head I have to tell you that letters are divided into vowels, so called because they express the voice, and into consonants, so called because they are sounded with the vowels, and only mark the different articulations of the voice. There are five vowels or voices, *a, e, i, o, u.*

M. Jour. Yes, I understand.

Prof. Phil. The vowel *a* is formed by opening the mouth very wide: *a.*

M. Jour. *A, a;* yes.

Prof. Phil. The vowel *e* is formed by drawing the lower jaw a little nearer to the upper: *a, e.*

M. Jour. *A, e; a, e;* to be sure. Ah! how beautiful that is!

Prof. Phil. And the vowel *i* by bringing the jaws still closer to one another, and stretching the two corners of the mouth toward the ears: *a, e, i.*

M. Jour. *A, e, i, i, i, i.* Quite true. Long live science!

Prof. Phil. The vowel *o* is formed by opening the jaws, and drawing in the lips at the two corners, the upper and the lower: *o.*

M. Jour. *O, o.* Nothing could be more elegant: *a, e, i, o, i, o.* It is admirable! *I, o, i, o.*

Prof. Phil. The opening of the mouth exactly makes a little circle, which resembles an *o.*

M. Jour. *O, o, o.* You are right. *O!* Ah! what a fine thing it is to know something!

Prof. Phil. The vowel *u* is formed by bringing the teeth near each other without entirely joining them, and thrusting

out both the lips while also bringing them near together without quite joining them: *u*.

M. Jour. *U, u.* Yes, you are quite right: *u*.

Prof. Phil. Your two lips lengthen as if you were pouting; so that, if you wish to make a grimace at anybody, and to laugh at him, you have only to *u* him.

M. Jour. *U, u.* It's true. Oh! that I had studied when I was younger, so as to know all this.

Prof. Phil. To-morrow we will speak of the other letters, which are the consonants.

M. Jour. Is there anything as curious in them as in these?

Prof. Phil. Certainly. For instance, the consonant *d* is pronounced by striking the tip of the tongue above the upper teeth: *da*.

M. Jour. *Da, da.* Yes. Ah! what beautiful things, what beautiful things!

Prof. Phil. The *f*, by pressing the upper teeth upon the lower lip: *fa*.

M. Jour. *Fa, fa.* 'Tis the truth. Ah! my father and my mother, how angry I feel with you!

Prof. Phil. And the *r*, by carrying the tip of the tongue up to the roof of the palate, so that, being grazed by the air which comes out forcibly, it yields to it, and, returning to the same place, causes a sort of tremor: *r, ra*.

M. Jour. *R-r-ra; r-r-r-r-r-ra.* That's true. What a clever man you are, and how much time I have lost. *R-r-ra*.

Prof. Phil. I will thoroughly explain all these curiosities to you.

M. Jour. Pray do. And now I want to entrust you with a great secret. I am in love with a lady of quality, and I should be glad if you would help me to write something to her in a short letter which I mean to drop at her feet.

Prof. Phil. Very well.

M. Jour. That will be gallant, will it not?

Prof. Phil. Undoubtedly. Is it verse you wish to write to her?

M. Jour. Oh, no, not verse.

Prof. Phil. You only wish for prose?

M. Jour. No, I wish neither verse nor prose.

Prof. Phil. It must be one or the other.

M. Jour. Why?

Prof. Phil. Because, sir, there is nothing by which we can express ourselves except prose or verse.

M. Jour. There is nothing but prose or verse?

Prof. Phil. No, sir. Whatever is not prose is verse, and whatever is not verse is prose.

M. Jour. And when we speak, what is that, then?

Prof. Phil. Prose.

M. Jour. What! when I say, "Nicole, bring me my slippers, and give me my night-cap," is that prose?

Prof. Phil. Yes, sir.

M. Jour. Upon my word, I have been talking prose these forty years without being aware of it! I am under the greatest obligation to you for informing me. Well, then, I wish to write to her in a letter, *Fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die of love;* but I would have this worded in a genteel manner, and turned prettily.

Prof. Phil. Say that the fire of her eyes has reduced your heart to ashes; that you suffer day and night for her tortures——

M. Jour. No, no, no; I don't want any of that. I simply wish to say what I tell you: *Fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die of love.*

Prof. Phil. Still, you might amplify the thing a little?

M. Jour. No, I tell you, I will have nothing but those very words in the letter; but they must be put in a fashionable way, and arranged as they should be. Pray explain a little, so that I may see the different ways in which they can be put.

Prof. Phil. They may be put, first of all, as you have said, *Fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die of love;* or else, *Of love die make me, fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes;* or, *Your beautiful eyes of love make me, fair marchioness, die;* or, *Die of love your beautiful eyes, fair marchioness, make me;* or else, *Me make your beautiful eyes die, fair marchioness, of love.*

M. Jour. But of all these ways, which is the best?

Prof. Phil. The one you said—*Fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die of love.*

M. Jour. Yet I have never studied, and I did all that right off at the first shot. I thank you with all my heart, and I beg you to come early again to-morrow morning.

Prof. Phil. I shall not fail you.—"*The Gentleman Cit.*"

Harpagon's Method of Money-Lending

CLÉANTE *and* LA FLÈCHE.

Clé. How now, you rascal! Where have you been hiding? Did I not give you orders to——

La Fl. Yes, sir, and I came here resolved to wait for you patiently; but your father, that unkindest of men, drove me into the street in spite of myself, and I nearly got a good drubbing into the bargain.

Clé. How is our affair progressing? Things seem worse than ever for us, and since I left you, I have discovered that my own father is my rival.

La Fl. Your father in love?

Clé. It appears so; and I found it very difficult to hide from him what I felt at such a discovery.

La Fl. He meddling with love! What the deuce is he thinking of? Does he mean to set everybody at defiance? And is love made for people of his build?

Clé. It is to punish me for my sins that this passion has entered his heart.

La Fl. But why do you hide your love from him?

Clé. That he may not suspect anything, and to make it more easy for me to fall back upon some device to prevent this marriage, if need be. What answer did you receive?

La Fl. Indeed, sir, borrowers are much to be pitied, and we must put up with strange things when, like you, we are forced to submit to the demands of usurers.

Clé. Then the affair won't come off?

La Fl. Excuse me; M. Simon, the broker who was recommended to us, is a very active and zealous fellow, and says he has left no stone unturned to help you. He assures me that your looks alone have won his heart.

Clé. Shall I have the fifteen thousand francs which I want?

La Fl. Yes, but under certain trifling conditions, which you must accept if you wish the bargain to be concluded.

Clé. Did you speak to the man who is to lend the money?

La Fl. Oh! dear, no! Things are not done in that way. He is still more anxious than you to remain unknown. These things are greater mysteries than you think. His name is on no account to be divulged, and he is to be introduced

to you to-day at a house designated by him, so that he may hear from yourself all about your position and your family; and I have not the least doubt that the mere name of your father will be sufficient to accomplish what you wish.

Clé. Particularly as my mother is dead, and they cannot deprive me of what I inherit from her.

La Fl. Well, here are some of the conditions which he has himself dictated to our go-between for you to take cognizance of, before anything is begun:

"Supposing that the lender is satisfied with all his securities, and that the borrower is of age and of a family whose property is ample, solid, secure, and free from all encumbrances, there shall be drawn up a good and correct bond before as honest a notary as it is possible to find, and who for this purpose shall be chosen by the lender, because he is the more concerned of the two that the bond shall be rightly executed."

Clé. There is nothing to say against that.

La Fl. "The lender, not to burden his conscience with the least scruple, does not wish to lend his money at more than five and a half per cent."

Clé. Five and a half per cent? By Jove, that's honest! We have nothing to complain of.

La Fl. That's true.

"But, as the said lender has not in hand the sum required, and as, in order to oblige the borrower, he is himself obliged to borrow from another at the rate of twenty per cent, it is but right that the said first borrower shall pay this interest, without detriment to the rest; since it is to oblige him that the said lender is himself forced to borrow."

Clé. The deuce! What a Jew! What a Turk we have here! That is more than twenty-five per cent.

La Fl. That's true; and it is the remark I made. It is for you to consider the matter before you act.

Clé. How can I consider? I want the money, and I must therefore accept everything.

La Fl. That is exactly what I answered.

Clé. Is there anything else?

La Fl. Only a small item.

"Of the fifteen thousand francs which are demanded, the lender will only be able to count down twelve thousand in hard cash; instead of the remaining three thousand, the borrower will have to take the chattels, clothing, and jewels contained in the following catalogue, and which the said lender has put in all good faith at the lowest possible figure."

Clé. What is the meaning of that?

La Fl. I'll go through the catalogue.

"Firstly: A four-post bedstead, with hangings of Hungary lace very elegantly trimmed with olive-colored cloth, and six chairs and a counterpane to match; the whole in very good condition, and lined with soft red and blue shot-silk. Item: The tester of good pale pink Aumale serge, with the small and the large fringes of silk."

Clé. What does he want me to do with all this?

La Fl. Wait.

"Item: Tapestry hangings representing the loves of Gombaud and Macée. Item: A large walnut table with twelve columns or turned legs, which draws out at both ends, and is provided beneath with six stools."

Clé. Hang it all! What am I to do with all this?

La Fl. Have patience.

"Item: Three large matchlocks inlaid with mother-of-pearl, with rests to correspond. Item: A brick furnace with two

retorts and three receivers, very useful to those who have any taste for distilling."

Clé. You will drive me crazy!

La Fl. A moment more!

"Item: A Bologna lute with all its strings, or nearly all. Item: A pigeon-hole table and a draft-board, and a game of Mother Goose, restored from the Greeks, most useful to pass the time when one has nothing to do. Item: A lizard's skin, three feet and a half in length, stuffed with hay, a pleasing curiosity to hang from the ceiling of a room. The whole of the above-mentioned articles are really worth more than four thousand five hundred francs, and are reduced to three thousand through the considerateness of the lender."

Clé. Let the plague choke him with his considerateness, wretch, cut-throat that he is! Did ever any one hear of such usury? Is he not satisfied with the outrageous interest he asks, that he must force me to take, instead of the three thousand francs, all the old rubbish which he picks up? I sha'n't get two hundred crowns for all that, and yet I must bring myself to yield to all his wishes; for he is in a position to force me to accept everything, and he has me with a knife at my throat—the villain!

La Fl. I see you, sir, if you'll forgive my saying so, on the high-road followed by Panurge to ruin—taking money in advance, buying dear, selling cheap, and cutting your hay while it is still grass.—"*The Miser.*"

J. B. Poquelin

An Interview with Trissotin

PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, BÉLISE, HENRIETTE, TRISSOTIN, *and* LÉPINE.

Phi. Let us sit down here to listen comfortably to these verses; they should be weighed word by word.

Arm. I am all anxiety to hear them.

Bél. And I am dying for them.

Phi. (*to* TRISSOTIN). Whatever comes from you is a delight to me.

Arm. To me it is an unparalleled pleasure.

Bél. It is a delicious repast offered to my ears.

Phi. Do not let us languish under such pressing desires.

Arm. Lose no time.

Bél. Begin quickly, and hasten our pleasure.

Phi. Offer your epigram to our impatience.

Tri. Alas! it is but a new-born child, madame, but its fate ought truly to touch your heart, for it was in your court-yard that I brought it forth but a moment since.

Phi. To make it dear to me, it is sufficient for me to know its father.

Tri. Your approbation may serve it as a mother.

Bél. What wit he has!

Phi. (*to* HENRIETTE, *who is going away*). Stop! Why do you run away?

Hen. I fear to disturb such sweet intercourse.

Phi. Come nearer, and with both ears share in the delight of hearing wonders.

Hen. I have little understanding for the beauties of authorship, and clever subtleties are not in my line.

Phi. No matter. Besides, I wish afterward to tell you of a secret which you must learn.

Tri. (*to* HENRIETTE). Knowledge has nothing that can touch you, and your only care is to charm everybody.

Hen. One as little as the other, and I have no wish to——

Bél. Ah! let us think of the new-born babe, I beg of you.

Phi. (*to* LÉPINE). Now, little page, bring some seats for us to sit down. (LÉPINE *slips down.*) You senseless boy, how can you fall down after having learned the laws of equilibrium?

Bél. Do you not perceive, ignorant fellow, the causes of your fall, and that it proceeds from your having deviated from the fixed point which we call the center of gravity?

Lép. I perceived it, madame, when I was on the ground.

Phi. (*to* LÉPINE, *who goes out*). Awkward clown!

Tri. It is fortunate for him that he is not made of glass.

Arm. Ah! wit is everything!

Bél. His never ceases.

Phi. Serve us quickly with your admirable feast.

Tri. To satisfy the great hunger which is here shown me, a dish of eight verses seems but little; and I think that I should do well to join to the epigram, or rather to the madrigal, the ragout of a sonnet which, in the eyes of a princess, was thought to have a certain delicacy in it. It is throughout seasoned with Attic salt, and I think you will find the taste of it tolerably good.

Arm. Ah! I have no doubt of it.

Phi. Let us quickly give ear.

Bél. (*interrupting* TRISSOTIN *each time he is about to read*). I feel, beforehand, my heart beating for joy. I love poetry to distraction, particularly when the verses are gallantly turned.

Phi. If we go on talking he will never be able to read.

Tri. SONN——

Bél. (*to* HENRIETTE). Be silent, niece.

Arm. Ah! let him read, I beg of you!

Tri. SONNET TO THE PRINCESS URANIA ON HER FEVER.

Your prudence fast in sleep's repose
Is plunged; if thus superbly kind,
A lodging gorgeously you find
For the most cruel of your foes——

Bél. Ah! what a pretty beginning!

Arm. What a charming turn it has!

Phi. He alone possesses the talent of making fluent verses.

Arm. We must yield to *prudence fast in sleep's repose is plunged.*

Bél. *A lodging for the most cruel of your foes* is full of charms for me.

Phi. I like *superbly* and *gorgeously;* these two adverbs coming together sound admirable.

Bél. Let us hear the rest.

Tri. *Your prudence fast in sleep's repose*
Is plunged; if thus superbly kind,
A lodging gorgeously you find
For the most cruel of your foes——

Arm. *Prudence asleep!*

Bél. *Lodge one's enemy!*

Phi. *Superbly and gorgeously!*

Tri. *Will she, nill she, quick, out she goes*
From your apartment richly lined.
Where that ingrate's outrageous mind
At your fair life her javelin throws.

Bél. Ah! wait! Allow me to breathe, I beseech you!

Arm. Give us time to admire, I beg!

Phi. One feels, at hearing these verses, an indescribable something which goes through one's inmost soul, and makes one feel quite faint.

Arm. *Will she, nill she, quick, out she goes*
From your apartment richly lined.

How prettily *rich apartment* is said here, and with what wit the metaphor is introduced!

Phi. *Will she, nill she, quick, out she goes!* Ah! in what admirable taste that *will she, nill she,* is! To my mind the passage is invaluable.

Arm. My heart is also in love with *will she, nill she.*

Bél. I am of your opinion; *will she, nill she,* is a happy expression.

Arm. I wish I had written it.

Bél. It is worth a whole poem!

Phi. But do you, like me, thoroughly understand the wit of it?

Arm. and Bél. Oh! oh!

Phi. *Will she, nill she, quick, out she goes!* Although another should take the fever's part, pay no attention; laugh at the gossips; *will she, nill she, quick, out she goes. Will she, nill she, will she, nill she.* This *will she, nill she,* says a great deal more than it seems. I do not know if every one is like me, but I discover a hundred meanings in it.

Bél. It is true that it says more than its size seems to imply.

Phi. (*to* TRISSOTIN). But when you wrote this charming *Will she, nill she,* did you yourself understand all its energy? Did you realize all that it tells us, and did you then know that you were writing something so witty?

Tri. Ah! ah!

Arm. I have likewise the *ingrate* in my head; this ungrateful, unjust, uncivil fever that ill-treats people who entertain her.

Phi. In short, both the stanzas are admirable. Let us come quickly to the triplets, I pray.

Arm. Ah! once more, *will she, nill she,* I beg!

Tri. *Will she, nill she, quick, out she goes!*

Phi., Arm., and Bél. *Will she, nill she!*

Tri. *From your apartment richly lined!*

Phi., Arm., and Bél. *Rich apartment!*

Tri. *Where that ingrate's outrageous mind!*

Phi., Arm., and Bél. That ungrateful fever!

Tri. *At your fair life her javelin throws.*

Phi. *Fair life!*

Arm. and Bél. Ah!

Tri. *What! without heed for your high line,*
She saps your blood with care malign——

Phi., Arm., and Bél. Ah!

Tri. *Redoubling outrage night and day!*
If to the bath you take her down,
Without a moment's haggling, pray,
With your own hands the miscreant drown.

Phi. Ah! it is quite overpowering!

Bél. I am fainting!

Arm. I am dying from pleasure!

Phi. A thousand sweet thrills seize one!

Arm. *If to the bath you take her down!*

Bél. *Without a moment's haggling, pray!*

Phi. *With your own hands the miscreant drown!* With your own hands, there, drown her there in the bath!

Arm. In your verses we meet at each step with charming beauty.

Bél. One promenades through them with rapture.

Phi. One treads on fine things only.

Arm. They are little lanes all strewn with roses.

Tri. Then the sonnet seems to you——

Phi. Admirable, new; and never did any one make anything more beautiful.

Bél. (*to* HENRIETTE). What! niece, you listen to what has been read without emotion! There you play a sorry part!

Hen. We each of us play the best part we can, aunt, and to be a wit does not depend on our will.

Tri. My verses, perhaps, are tedious to you.

Hen. No, I am not listening to them.

Phi. Now let us hear the epigram.

Tri. ON PRESENTING AN AMARANTH-COLORED CARRIAGE TO A LADY FRIEND.

Phi. His titles have always something rare in them.

Arm. They prepare one for a hundred flashes of wit.

Tri. *Love for his bonds so dear a price demands,*
E'en now it costs me more than half my lands;
And when this chariot meets your eyes,
Where so much gold emboss'd doth rise
That people all astonished stand,
And Laïs rides in triumph through the land——

Phi. Ah! Laïs! What erudition!

Bél. Exquisitely pretty, and worth a million!

Tri. *And when this chariot meets your eyes,*
Where so much gold emboss'd doth rise
That people all astonished stand,
And Laïs rides in triumph through the land,
Say no more it is amaranth,
Say rather it is oh, my rent!

Arm. Oh, oh, oh! It surpasses everything! Who would have expected that?

Phi. He is the only man who writes with such taste.

Bél. Say no more it is *amaranth, say rather it is oh, my rent!* It can be declined: *my rent; of my rent; to my rent; from my rent.*

Phi. I do not know whether I was prepossessed from the first moment I saw you, but I admire all your prose and verse whenever I see it.

Tri. (*to* PHILAMINTE). If you would only show us something of your composition, we could admire in our turn.

Phi. I have done nothing in verse. But I have reason to hope that I shall, shortly, be able, as a friend, to show you eight chapters of the plan of our academy. Plato only touched on the subject when he wrote the treatise of his *Republic*; but I will complete the idea as I have arranged it on paper in prose. For, in short, I am truly angry at the wrong which is done us in regard to intelligence; and I will avenge the whole sex for the unworthy place which men assign us by confining our talents to trifles, and by shutting the door of sublime knowledge against us.

Arm. It is insulting our sex too grossly to limit our intelligence to the power of judging of a skirt, of the make of a garment, of the beauties of lace, or of a new brocade.

Bél. We must rise above this shameful condition, and bravely proclaim our emancipation.

Tri. Every one knows my respect for the fair sex, and that if I render homage to the brightness of their eyes, I also honor the splendor of their intellect.

Phi. And our sex does you justice in this respect. But we will show to certain minds who treat us with proud contempt that women also have knowledge; that, like men,

they can hold learned meetings—regulated, too, by better rules; that they wish to unite what elsewhere is kept apart, join noble language to deep learning, reveal Nature's laws by a thousand experiments; and on all questions proposed, admit every party, and ally themselves to none.

Tri. For order, I prefer peripateticism.

Phi. For abstractions, give me Platonism.

Arm. Epicurus pleases me, for his tenets are solid.

Bél. I agree with the doctrine of atoms; but I find it difficult to understand a vacuum, and I much prefer subtile matter.

Tri. I quite agree with Descartes about magnetism.

Arm. I like his vortices.

Phi. And I his falling worlds.

Arm. I long to see our assembly opened, and to distinguish ourselves by some great discovery.

Tri. Much is expected from your enlightened knowledge, for Nature has hidden few things from you.

Phi. For my part, I have, without boasting, already made one discovery: I have plainly seen men in the moon.

Bél. I have not, I believe, as yet quite distinguished men, but I have seen steeples as plainly as I see you.

Arm. In addition to natural philosophy, we will plunge into grammar, history, poetry, ethics, and politics.

Phi. I find in ethics charms which delight my heart; it was formerly the admiration of great geniuses; but I give the preference to the Stoics, and I think nobody so grand as their founder.

Arm. Our regulations in respect to language will soon be known, and we mean to create a revolution. Through a just or natural antipathy, we have each of us taken a mortal hatred to certain words, both verbs and nouns, and these we

mutually abandon to each other. We are preparing sentences of death against them, and we shall open our learned meetings by the proscription of the sundry words of which we mean to purge both prose and verse.

Phi. But the greatest project of our assembly—a noble enterprise which transports me with joy, a glorious design which will be approved by all the lofty geniuses of posterity—is the cutting out of all those filthy syllables which, in the finest words, are a source of scandal: those eternal jests of the fools of all times; those nauseous commonplaces of wretched buffoons; those sources of infamous ambiguity, with which the purity of women is insulted.

Tri. These are indeed admirable projects.

Bél. You shall see our regulations when they are quite ready.

Tri. They cannot fail to be wise and beautiful.

Arm. We shall by our laws be the judges of all works; by our laws, prose and verse will both alike be submitted to us. No one will have wit except us or our friends. We shall try to find fault with everything, and esteem no one capable of writing but ourselves. *Enter* LÉPINE.

Lép. (*to* TRISSOTIN). Sir, there is a gentleman who wants to speak to you; he is dressed all in black, and talks in a soft tone.

Tri. It is that learned friend who entreated me so much to procure him the honor of your acquaintance.

Phi. You have our full leave to present him to us.

(LÉPINE *ushers in* VADIUS.)

Tri. (*introducing* VADIUS). Here is the gentleman who is dying to see you. In presenting him I am not afraid, madame, of being accused of introducing a profane person to you; he can hold his place among the wits.

Phi. The hand which introduces him sufficiently proves his value.

Tri. He has a perfect knowledge of the ancient authors, and knows Greek, madame, as well as any man in France.

Phi. (*to* BÉLISE). Greek! Oh, heaven! Greek! He understands Greek, sister!

Bél. (*to* ARMANDE). Ah, niece! Greek!

Arm. Greek! Ah! how delightful!

Phi. What, sir, you understand Greek? Allow me, I beg, for the love of Greek, to embrace you.

(VADIUS *embraces also* BÉLISE *and* ARMANDE.)

Hen. (*to* VADIUS, *who comes forward to embrace her*). Excuse me, sir, I do not understand Greek.

Phi. I have a wonderful respect for Greek books.

Vad. I fear that the anxiety which calls me to render my homage to you to-day, madame, may render me importunate. I may have disturbed some learned discourse.

Phi. Sir, with Greek in possession, you can spoil nothing.

Tri. Moreover, he does wonders in prose as well as in verse, and he could, if he chose, show you something.

Vad. The fault of authors is to burden conversation with their productions; to be, at court, in the public walks, in the drawing-rooms, or at table, the indefatigable readers of their tedious verses. As for me, I think nothing more ridiculous than an author who goes about begging for praise; who, preying on the ears of the first comers, often makes them the martyrs of his night-watches. I have never been guilty of such foolish conceit, and I am in that respect of the opinion of a Greek, who by an express law forbade all wise men any unbecoming anxiety to read his works. Here are some little verses for young lovers upon which I should like to have your opinion.

Tri. Your verses have beauties unequaled by any others.

Vad. Venus and the graces reign in all yours.

Tri. You have an easy style, and a fine choice of words.

Vad. In all your writings one finds *ithos* and *pathos.*

Tri. We have seen some eclogues of your composition which surpass in sweetness those of Theocritus and Vergil.

Vad. Your odes have a noble, gallant, and tender manner, which leaves Horace far behind.

Tri. Is there anything more lovely than your canzonets?

Vad. Is there anything equal to the sonnets you write?

Tri. Is there anything more charming than your little rondeaus?

Vad. Anything so full of wit as your madrigals?

Tri. If France could appreciate your value——

Vad. If the age could render justice to a lofty genius——

Tri. You would ride in the streets in a gilt coach.

Vad. We should see the public erect statues to you. Hem— It is a ballad; and I wish you frankly to——

Tri. Have you heard a certain little sonnet upon the Princess Urania's fever?

Vad. Yes; I heard it read yesterday.

Tri. Do you know the author of it?

Vad. No, I do not; but I know very well that, to tell him the truth, his sonnet is good for nothing.

Tri. Yet a great many people think it admirable.

Vad. It does not prevent it from being wretched; and if you had read it you would think like me.

Tri. I know that I should differ from you altogether, and that few people are able to write such a sonnet.

Vad. Heaven forbid that I should ever write one so bad!

Tri. I maintain that a better one cannot be made, and my reason is that I am the author of it.

Vad. You?

Tri. Myself.

Vad. I cannot understand how the thing could have happened.

Tri. It is unfortunate that I had not the power of pleasing you.

Vad. My mind must have wandered during the reading, or else the reader spoiled the sonnet; but let us leave that subject, and come to my ballad.

Tri. The ballad is, to my mind, an insipid thing; it is no longer the fashion, and savors of ancient times.

Vad. Yet a ballad has charms for many people.

Tri. It does not prevent me from thinking it unpleasant.

Vad. That does not make it worse.

Tri. It has wonderful attractions for pedants.

Vad. Yet we see that it does not please you.

Tri. You stupidly impose your qualities on others.

Vad. You very impertinently cast yours upon me.

Tri. Go, you little dunce, you pitiful quill-driver!

Vad. Go, you penny-a-liner, you disgrace to the profession!

Tri. Go, you book-manufacturer, you impudent plagiarist!

Vad. Go, you pedantic snob!

Phi. Ah! gentlemen, what are you about?

Tri. (*to* VADIUS). Go, go, and make restitution to the Greeks and Romans for all your shameful thefts!

Vad. Go, and do penance on Parnassus for having murdered Horace in your verses!

Tri. Remember your book, and the little stir it made.

Vad. And you, remember your bookseller, reduced to the workhouse.

Tri. My fame is established; in vain would you endeavor to shake it.

Vad. Yes, yes; I'll send you to the author of the *Satires.*

Tri. I, too, will send you to him.

Vad. I have the satisfaction of having been honorably treated by him; he gives me a passing thrust, and includes me among several authors well known at court. But you he never leaves in peace; in all his verses he attacks you.

Tri. By that we see the honorable rank I hold. He leaves you in the crowd, and esteems one blow enough to crush you. He has never done you the honor of repeating his attacks, whereas he assails me separately, as a noble adversary against whom all his efforts are necessary. His blows, repeated against me on all occasions, show that he never thinks himself victorious.

Vad. My pen will teach you what sort of man I am!

Tri. And mine will make you know your master!

Vad. I defy you in verse, prose, Greek, and Latin!

Tri. Very well, we shall meet again at the bookseller's!

—*"The Learned Women."*

An Apothecary's Bill

ARGAN (*sitting at a table, adding up his apothecary's bill with counters*).

THREE and two make five, and five make ten, and ten make twenty. "Item: on the 24th, a small, insinuative clyster, preparative and gentle, to soften, moisten, and refresh the bowels of M. Argan." What I like about M.

Fleurant, my apothecary, is that his bills are always civil—"The bowels of M. Argan." All the same, M. Fleurant, it is not enough to be civil, you must also be reasonable, and not plunder sick people. Thirty sous for a clyster! I have already told you, with all due respect to you, that elsewhere you have only charged me twenty sous; and twenty sous, in the language of apothecaries, means only ten sous. Here they are, these ten sous. "Item: on the said day, a good detergent clyster compounded of double catholicon rhubarb, honey of roses, and other ingredients, according to the prescription, to scour, work, and clear out the bowels of M. Argan, thirty sous." With your leave, ten sous. "Item: on the said day, in the evening, a julep, hepatic, soporiferous, and somniferous, intended to promote the sleep of M. Argan, thirty-five sous." I do not complain of that, for it made me sleep very well. Ten, fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen sous six deniers. "Item: on the 25th, a good purgative and corroborative mixture, composed of fresh cassia with Levantine senna and other ingredients, according to the prescription of M. Purgon, to expel M. Argan's bile, four francs." You are joking, M. Fleurant; you must learn to be reasonable with patients; M. Purgon never ordered you to put four francs. Tut! put three francs, if you please. Worth thirty sous. "Item: on the said day, a dose, anodyne and astringent, to make M. Argan sleep, thirty sous." Ten sous, M. Fleurant. "Item: on the 26th, a carminative clyster to cure the flatulence of M. Argan, thirty sous." "Item: the clyster repeated in the evening, as above, thirty sous." Ten sous, M. Fleurant. "Item: on the 27th, a good mixture composed for the purpose of driving out the bad humors of M. Argan, three francs." Good; twenty or thirty sous; I am glad that you are reasonable. "Item: on the 28th, a dose of clarified and edulcorated

whey, to soften, lenify, temper, and refresh the blood of M. Argan, twenty sous." Good; ten sous. "Item: a potion, cordial, and preservative, composed of twelve grains of bezoar, sirup of citrons, and pomegranates, and other ingredients, according to the prescription, five francs." Ah! M. Fleurant, gently, if you please; if you go on like that, no one will wish to be unwell. Be satisfied with four francs. Twenty, forty sous. Three and two are five, and five are ten, and ten are twenty. Sixty-three francs four sous six deniers. So that during this month I have taken one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight mixtures, and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve clysters; and last month there were twelve mixtures and twenty clysters. I am not astonished, therefore, that I am not so well this month as last. I shall speak to M. Purgon about it, so that he may set the matter right.

—*"The Imaginary Invalid."*

Monsieur Purgon

M. Purgon, Argan, Béralde, *and* Toinette.

M. Pur. I have just heard nice news down-stairs. You laugh at my prescriptions, and refuse to take the remedy which I ordered.

Arg. Sir, it is not——

M. Pur. What daring boldness, what a strange revolt of a patient against his doctor!

Toi. It is frightful!

M. Pur. A clyster which I have had the pleasure of composing myself——

Arg. It was not I——

M. Pur. Invented and made up according to all the rules of art——

Toi. He was wrong.

M. Pur. And intended to work a marvelous effect on the intestines.

Arg. My brother——

M. Pur. To send it back with contempt!

Arg. (*indicating* BÉRALDE). It was he——

M. Pur. Such conduct is monstrous.

Toi. So it is.

M. Pur. It is a fearful outrage against medicine——

Arg. (*indicating* BÉRALDE). He is the cause——

M. Pur. A crime of high treason against the faculty, and one which cannot be too severely punished.

Toi. You are quite right.

M. Pur. I declare to you that I break off all intercourse with you——

Arg. It is my brother——

M. Pur. That I will have no more connection with you——

Toi. You will do quite right.

M. Pur. And to end all association with you, here is the deed of gift which I made to my nephew in favor of the marriage. (*He tears up the document, and throws the pieces about furiously.*)

Arg. It is my brother who has done all the mischief.

M. Pur. To despise my clyster!

Arg. Let it be brought; I will take it directly.

M. Pur. I would have cured you in a very short time.

Toi. He doesn't deserve it.

M. Pur. I was about to cleanse your body, and to clear it of its bad humors.

Arg. Ah! brother!

M. Pur. And it wanted only a dozen purgatives to cleanse it entirely.

Toi. He is unworthy of your care.

M. Pur. But since you would not be cured by me——

Arg. It was not my fault.

M. Pur. Since you have forsaken the obedience you owe to your doctor——

Toi. It cries for vengeance.

M. Pur. Since you have declared yourself a rebel against the remedies I had prescribed for you——

Arg. No, no, certainly not!

M. Pur. I must now tell you that I give you up to your bad constitution, to the intemperament of your intestines, to the corruption of your blood, to the acrimony of your bile, and to the feculence of your humors.

Toi. It serves you right.

Arg. Alas!

M. Pur. And in four days you will be in an incurable state.

Arg. Oh! have mercy on me!

M. Pur. You will fall into bradypepsia——

Arg. Monsieur Purgon!

M. Pur. From bradypepsia into dyspepsia——

Arg. Monsieur Purgon!

M. Pur. From dyspepsia into apepsy——

Arg. Monsieur Purgon!

M. Pur. From apepsy into lientery——

Arg. Monsieur Purgon!

M. Pur. From lientery into dysentery——

Arg. Monsieur Purgon!

M. Pur. From dysentery into dropsy——

Arg. Monsieur Purgon!

M. Pur. And from dropsy into the deprivation of life to which your folly will bring you.—"*The Imaginary Invalid.*"

The Jealousy of Le Barbouillé

CHARACTERS:

LE BARBOUILLÉ, *Husband to* ANGÉLIQUE.
THE DOCTOR.
ANGÉLIQUE.
VALÈRE, *Lover to* ANGÉLIQUE.
CATHAU, *Maid to* ANGÉLIQUE.
GORGIBUS, *Father to* ANGÉLIQUE.
VILLEBREQUIN.
LA VALLÉE.

LE BARBOUILLÉ.

Bar. Everybody must acknowledge that I am the most unfortunate of men! I have a wife who plagues me to death; and who, instead of bringing me comfort and doing things as I like them to be done, makes me swear at her twenty times a day. Instead of keeping at home, she likes gadding about, eating good dinners, and passing her time with people of any sort of character. Ah! poor Le Barbouillé, how much you are to be pitied! But she must be punished. Suppose you killed her? It would do no good, for you would be hung afterward. Suppose you were to have her sent to prison?

The minx would find means of getting out. What the deuce are you to do?— But here is the doctor coming out this way; suppose I ask his advice on my difficulties.

Enter Doctor.

Bar. I was going to fetch you, to beg for your opinion on a question of great importance to me.

Doc. You must be very ill-bred, very loutish, and very ignorant, my friend, to speak to me in that fashion, without first taking off your hat, without observing *rationem loci, temporis et personæ.* What! you begin by an abrupt speech, instead of saying *Salve, vel salvus sis, doctor doctorum eruditissime!* What do you take me for, eh?

Bar. Really, doctor, I am very sorry; the fact is that I am almost beside myself, and did not think of what I was doing; but I know you are a gentleman.

Doc. Do you know what *gentleman* comes from?

Bar. It matters little to me whether it comes from Villejuif or Aubervilliers.

Doc. Know that the word *gentleman* comes from *elegant.* But to come back to what I said: what do you take me for?

Bar. I take you for a doctor. But let us speak a moment of what I have to propose to you. You must know that——

Doc. Let me tell you first that I am not only a doctor, but that I am one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and ten times doctor. Firstly, number one is the base, the foundation, and the first of all numbers; so am I the first of all doctors, the most learned of the learned. Secondly, there are two faculties essential for a perfect knowledge of things: the sense and the understanding. I am all sense, all understanding; *ergo,* I am twice doctor.

Bar. Granted. What I want——

Doc. Thirdly, according to Aristotle, the number three is that of perfection. I am perfect; and everything I do is perfect; *ergo,* I am three times doctor.

Bar. Very well, then, doctor——

Doc. Fourthly, philosophy is divided into four parts: logic, morals, physics, and metaphysics. I possess all four, and know them perfectly; *ergo,* I am four times doctor.

Bar. Deuce take it, I don't doubt it! Listen to me now!

Doc. Fifthly, there are five universals: the genus, the species, the differentia, the property, and the accident, without knowing which it is impossible to arrive at any satisfactory conclusions. I make great use of them, and know how important they are; *ergo,* I am five times doctor.

Bar. I must have patience.

Doc. Sixthly, number six is the number of work. I work incessantly for my own glory; *ergo,* I am six times doctor.

Bar. Well, well, go on talking as long as you like.

Doc. Seventhly, the number seven is the number of bliss. I possess a perfect knowledge of all that can produce happiness, and through my talents am happy myself. I am therefore forced to say of myself: *O ter quaterque beatum!* Eighthly, the number eight is the number of justice, on account of the equality which is found in it. The justice and prudence with which I measure and weigh all my actions make me eight times doctor. Ninthly, there are nine Muses, and I am equally the favorite of them all. Tenthly, one cannot pass number ten without repeating all the other numbers, and it is the universal number. Similarly, when people have found me, they have found the universal doctor; and I am in myself all the other doctors together. Thus, with the help of these plausible, true, demonstrative, and convincing reasons,

you see that I am one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten times doctor.

Bar. (*aside*). What the deuce does he mean by all this? I thought I had found a clever man who would give me good advice, and I find a chimney-sweep, who, instead, plays at mora.—One, two, three, four—ha! ha!—ha! ha! Come, come, that's not it; you must listen to me, and remember that I am not a man to make you lose your time; I shall make it worth your while, and if you can satisfy me in what I want of you, I will give you what you wish—money, if you like.

Doc. Ha! money?

Bar. Yes, money; and whatever you may ask besides.

Doc. (*sharply, tucking up his gown behind him*). Then you take me for a man who would do anything for money, for a man fond of money, for a mercenary soul? Know, my friend, that if you were to give me a purse full of gold, and that this purse were in a rich box, this box in a precious case, this case in a superb chest, this chest in a rare museum, this museum in a magnificent apartment, this apartment in a gorgeous castle, this castle in a wonderful citadel, this citadel in a celebrated town, this town in a fertile island, this island in an opulent province, this province in a flourishing monarchy, this monarchy in the whole world; that if you gave me the world in which this flourishing monarchy would be, in which this opulent province would be, in which this fertile island would be, in which this celebrated town would be, in which this wonderful citadel would be, in which this gorgeous castle would be, in which this pleasant apartment would be, in which this rare museum would be, in which this wonderful chest would be, in which this precious case would be, in which this rich box would be, in which the purse

full of gold would be, I should care no more for it than this! (*Snaps his fingers and exit.*)

Bar. Well, I made a mistake. Seeing him dressed as a doctor, I felt that of necessity I must mention money to him; but since he does not want any, nothing can be more easy than to satisfy him. I'll run after him. (*Runs out.*)

Enter ANGÉLIQUE, VALÈRE, *and* CATHAU.

Ang. I assure you, sir, that you will oblige me very much by coming to see me sometimes; my husband is so ugly, so ill-behaved, and such a drunkard, that it is perfect martyrdom for me to be with him, and I ask you what pleasure one can have with such a clown as he is?

Val. You do me too much honor. I promise you I shall do my utmost to amuse you, and since you are kind enough to say that my company is not unpleasant, my care and attentions shall prove to you what pleasure this good news gives me.

Cat. Oh! quick, talk of something else! Here's our old bugbear coming.

Enter LE BARBOUILLÉ.

Val. Angélique, I am very sorry to bring you such bad news, but you would have heard it from some one else; and since your brother is ill——

Ang. Ah! say no more, sir; I am obliged, and thank you very much for the trouble you have taken. (*Exit* VALÈRE.)

Bar. Well! what need is there of my having a certifi-

cate of my cuckledom from the notary? So, so, you trollop! I find you with a man in spite of all my remonstrances, and you want to send me from Gemini to Capricornus.

Ang. Are you going to scold me for that? This gentleman only just came to tell me of my brother's serious illness. Why should you make that a subject of quarrel?

Cat. Ah! directly I saw him, I wondered if we should be long in peace.

Bar. You spoil one another, you women; you, Cathau, you corrupt my wife; she is not half as good now as she was before she had you to wait upon her.

Cat. Really, you treat me in a nice manner.

Ang. Leave the drunkard alone; don't you see that he is so muddled that he does not even know what he says?

Enter GORGIBUS *and* VILLEBREQUIN.

Gor. Now, there's my cursed son-in-law scolding my daughter again!

Vill. We must see what is the matter.

Gor. What! will you always be quarreling? Will you never have peace at home?

Bar. This hussy calls me drunkard. (*To* ANGÉLIQUE.) Here, I have a great mind to give you a good dressing down before your relations.

Gor. May the dev—may his money be blessed, if you have done as he says.

Ang. It is always he who begins to——

Cat. Cursed be the hour when you chose that sordid wretch!

Enter DOCTOR.

Doc. Why, what is the meaning of this? What disorder! What a quarrel! What a racket! What a row! What a noise! What a dispute! What a combustion! What is the matter, gentlemen? What is the matter? What is the matter? Come, come, is there no way of making you agree? Let me be your pacificator; suffer me to bring peace among you.

Gor. It is my son-in-law and my daughter who have had words together.

Doc. But what can it be? Now, come, let me know the cause of their dispute.

Gor. Sir——

Doc. But in a few words——

Gor. Yes, yes; but put on your hat.

Doc. Hat—that is bonnet. Do you know what *bonnet* comes from?

Gor. No.

Doc. It comes from *bonum est,* it is good, a thing which is good, because it saves one from colds and coughs.

Gor. Indeed! I did not know that.

Doc. Now, quick: the subject of your quarrel?

Gor. This is what happened——

Doc. I hope you are not a man to keep me long when I pray you not to do so. I have some pressing business which calls me to town; still, if I can bring peace to your family, I am willing to stop a moment.

Gor. I shall soon have done.

Doc. Be quick, then.

Gor. It will be said in a moment, if——

Doc. We must acknowledge, M. Gorgibus, that it is a

wonderful gift to be able to say things in a few words, and that great talkers, instead of being heard, become often so wearisome that one cannot listen to them. *Virtutem primam esse puta compescere linguam.* Yes, the best quality of a good man is silence.

Gor. You must know, then——

Doc. There are three things which Socrates used to recommend particularly to his disciples: to be careful of one's actions, to be sober in eating, and to say things in a few words. Begin, M. Gorgibus.

Gor. It is my wish to do so.

Doc. In a few words, without ceremony, without indulging in a long speech; cut it short with an apothegm; quick, quick, M. Gorgibus; make haste, avoid prolixity.

Gor. Allow me to speak then——

Doc. That's enough, M. Gorgibus; you talk too much. Somebody else must tell me what was the cause of their quarrel.

Vill. You must know, sir, that——

Doc. You are an ignoramus, an unlearned man, ignorant of all good rules—an ass, in plain language. What! you begin a discourse without a word of exordium! Some one else must tell me what happened. Will you, young lady, tell me the particulars of all this disturbance?

Ang. Do you see my fat rascal, my wine-barrel of a husband?

Doc. Gently, if you please; speak with respect of your husband when you are under the nose of a doctor like me.

Ang. Ah! I should just think so, doctor! Much I care for you or your doctrine! I am a doctor myself whenever I please.

Doc. You, a doctor when you please? A nice doctor you'd

make! You seem to me to do much as you like. But, I say, tell me the cause of the uproar.

Bar. Sir, your honor——

Doc. You begin well: "Your honor!" This has something flattering to the ear, something full of magniloquence, this "your honor!"

Bar. According to my will——

Doc. Quite right. "According to my will!" The will speaks of a wish, the wish presupposes means to come to one's end, and the end presupposes an object. Well said: "According to my will!"

Bar. I am bursting with rage.

Doc. Cut out this word "bursting." It is a low, vulgar expression.

Bar. But, doctor, listen to me, for mercy's sake.

Doc. *Audi, quæso,* Cæsar would have said.

Bar. Seize her, or don't seize her, you will listen to me or I will break your doctoral neck! What the devil do you mean by all this?

(LE BARBOUILLÉ, ANGÉLIQUE, GORGIBUS, CATHAU, VILLEBREQUIN *all try to explain the cause of the quarrel. The* DOCTOR *explains that peace is a fine thing. They all talk together, and make a dreadful noise. In the midst of this,* LE BARBOUILLÉ *ties the* DOCTOR *by the legs with a rope, throws him down on his back, and drags him away. The* DOCTOR *goes on talking all the time, and counts all his arguments on his fingers, as if he were not on the ground.*)

Gor. Now, daughter, go back to your home and live in peace with your husband.

Vill. Your servant. Good night.

(*Exeunt* VILLEBREQUIN, GORGIBUS, ANGÉLIQUE, *and* CATHAU.)

Enter La Vallée.

Val. I am extremely obliged to you, sir, for the trouble you have taken, and I promise you that in about an hour's time I shall be at the appointed place of meeting.

La Val. It cannot be put off so long. In a quarter of an hour the ball will be over, and you will miss the pleasure of meeting the person you love there.

Val. Let us go together then.

(*Exeunt* Valère *and* La Vallée.)

Enter Angélique.

Ang. While my husband is absent, I will just go round to a ball given by one of our neighbors. I shall be back before him, for he is drinking somewhere. He will not even know that I am gone out. The wretched brute always leaves me alone at home, as if I were his dog. (*Exit.*)

Enter Le Barbouillé.

Bar. I knew that I should master that beast of a doctor and his stupid doctrine. Devil take the ignorant ass! I soon brought all his science to the ground. I must now go and see if my good wife has prepared anything for my supper.

(*Exit.*)

Enter Angélique.

Ang. How unlucky! I went too late; the party was over. I arrived just as everybody was leaving. But never mind, another time will do. I will go home as if nothing was the matter. Bless me! the door is locked!—Cathau! Cathau!

Bar. (*at window*). "Cathau! Cathau!" Well! what is the matter with Cathau? And where do you come from at this time of night, and in such weather?

Ang. Where do I come from? Just open the door, and I will tell you.

Bar. Yes, you catch me! You may go back and sleep where you came from. I'll not open to a gadabout like you. What! alone at this time of night! I don't know if it is fancy, but my forehead seems to me already rougher by half.

Ang. Well, what do you mean by scolding me because I am alone? You scold me whenever I have somebody with me. What am I to do?

Bar. Stay at home, give orders for the supper, take care of the household and of the children. But it is no use talking so much. Good-by, good night! Go to the devil, and leave me in peace!

Ang. You won't open to me?

Bar. No, I will not open to you.

Ang. Ah! my dear little husband, I beg of you open the door. Do, my darling little heart!

Bar. Ah! crocodile! Ah! dangerous serpent! You flatter me to betray me.

Ang. Open, do open!

Bar. Farewell! *Vade retro!*

Ang. What, you won't open?

Bar. No!

Ang. You have no pity for the wife who loves you so much?

Bar. No, I am inflexible. You have offended me; I am revengeful as the very devil! That is to say plainly that I am inexorable.

Ang. Do you know that if you push me too far, and put

me in a passion, I may do something which will make you repent your unkindness.

Bar. And what will you do, dear little vixen?

Ang. I declare that if you do not open to me, I will kill myself before this door. My parents will no doubt come here before going to bed, to see if we are all right together; and they will find me dead, and you will he hung.

Bar. Ha, ha, ha, ha, the silly creature! Tell me who would lose the most? Nonsense, you are not so foolish as to play such a trick.

Ang. You don't believe me. See, here is my knife all ready. If you do not open at once I will pierce myself to the heart with it.

Bar. Take care; it is very sharp.

Ang. You won't open to me?

Bar. I have told you twenty times that I will not open. Kill yourself, die, go to the devil, I don't care!

Ang. (*pretending to stab herself*). Farewell, then. Alas! I am dead.

Bar. Can she be stupid enough to do such a thing? I must go down with the light and see.

Ang. (*aside*). I will pay you out. If I can only slip into the house while you are looking for me, it will be my turn.

(LE BARBOUILLÉ *comes out, and while he is groping for her in the dark she manages to get into the house without his observing her.*)

Bar. Well! I knew she was not so stupid as all that! She is dead, and yet she runs like Pacolet's horse. To say the truth, she really frightened me. She did right to run away, for if I had found her alive after she had given me such a fright, my boot would have taught her not to play

the fool. I must go to bed now. Hullo! the wind must have shut the door to, I fear. Hi! Cathau, Cathau, open the door!

Ang. (*at the window*). "Cathau! Cathau!" Well, what is the matter with Cathau? And where do you come from, you drunkard? Well, well, my parents will soon be here, and will hear all about you. You wine-tap, you infamous wretch, you never stir from the public house, but leave a poor wife with little children waiting for you all day at home without caring whether they are in want of anything, or not.

Bar. Open the door quickly, she-devil, or I'll break your head open!

Enter GORGIBUS *and* VILLEBREQUIN.

Gor. Why, what is it now? Still quarreling and fighting?

Vill. What! will you never agree?

Ang. Only just look at him! He is drunk, and returns at this time of night to make a noise and threaten to kill me.

Gor. She is right. It is not at this hour of the night you should come home. Why can you not, like a good father of a family, come home early and live at peace with your wife?

Bar. Deuce take me, if I left the house! Ask those gentlemen who are on the terrace there. It is she who has only just come home. Ah! how innocence is always oppressed!

Gor. Well! Come, come, try to agree together, and ask her to forgive you.

Bar. I ask her to forgive me! I had rather the devil flew off with her. I am in such a terrible rage, I hardly know what to do.

Gor. Come, daughter, kiss your husband, and be friends.

DOCTOR *appears in night-gear at another window.*

Doc. What! always noise, disorder, dissension, quarrels, strife, disputes, uproar, everlasting altercations! What is it? What can it be? One can get no rest.

Vill. It is nothing, Doctor; every one is agreed.

Doc. Ah! about being agreed, shall I read you a chapter of Aristotle, where he proves that all the different parts of the universe subsist only through the concord which exists between them?

Vill. Will it be long?

Doc. No, it's not a bit long; only about sixty or eighty pages.

Vill. Thanks. Good night, good night!

Gor. You need not trouble.

Doc. Do you wish for it?

Gor. No.

Doc. Good night, then—*latine, bona nox.*

Vill. Let us all go and have supper together.

Paul Scarron

Ragotin's Civility

As soon as Destiny had stripped himself of his old embroidery and put on his ordinary wearing apparel, La Rapinière took him to the common jail, because the man they had taken that day the curate of Domfront was set upon desiring to speak to. In the mean time the actresses went home to their inn with a numerous attendance of citizens. Ragotin happening to be near Cave as she came out of the tennis-court where they had acted, offered her his hand to lead her home, though he would rather have paid that polite service to his dear Star; he did the like to Angelica, so that he was squire upon the right and left. This double civility occasioned a treble inconvenience, for Cave, who had the upper hand, as in all reason she ought, was crowded to the wall by Ragotin, that Angelica might not be forced to walk in the gutter. Besides, the little dwarf, reaching no higher than their waists, pulled down their hands so much, that they could scarce keep themselves from tumbling over him. But what most troubled them was his so often looking behind to stare at Madam Star, who was talking to a couple of country gallants, who would by all means escort her to her lodgings against her will. The poor actresses endeavored many times to get loose from their gentleman usher, but he held so fast that they felt themselves in fetters.

They requested him a hundred times to spare himself his trouble, but he only answered, "Your servant, your servant" (his ordinary compliment), and gripped their hands ever

harder and harder. Therefore they were fain to be patient till they came to their chamber-stairs, where they hoped to be set at liberty. But Ragotin was better bred; and repeating only "Your servant, your servant," to all they could say, he endeavored at first to go up with them abreast, which he found impossible. Then Cave turned her back to the wall and crept up sideways, dragging Ragotin after her, who dragged Angelica in like manner, she dragging nobody, but laughing like mad.

Now as an additional inconvenience, when they were within four or five steps of their chamber-door, down comes a servant belonging to the inn, with a huge sack of oats of excessive weight on his back, who, with much ado—so heavy was his load—bids them go down, because he could not get up again with his burden. Ragotin must needs argue the case with him; the fellow swore bluntly he would let his sack fall upon them. This made them go down much faster than they had come up; but Ragotin would not, for all that, let go his hold. The man with the oats pressed on close behind them, which caused Ragotin to miss a step, so that he hung in the air, still holding the actresses by the hand, till he pulled down Cave upon him, who supported him more than her daughter by reason of the advantage of the place. Thus she tumbled down upon him, lighting with her feet on the pygmy's chest and belly, and knocked her head so fiercely against her daughter's that they lay all three rolling on the floor. The fellow, thinking they could not easily get up in time, and being no longer able to support his load, let his sack down upon the stairs, swearing and cursing like an hostler. The sack burst open with the fall, and in came mine host, who scolded like mad. But as he was angry at the fellow, so the fellow was angry at the players, and they

as angry at Ragotin, who was the angriest of them all; but Madam Star, coming not far behind, was witness of this disgraceful scene, not much inferior to that late adventure of the deep-crowned hat, wherein his head had been most unmercifully pent up, not to be recovered until a pair of scissors had broken the enchantment. Cave swore a great oath that Ragotin should never lead her again, and showed Madam Star how black and blue he had squeezed her hand. Star told her it was a just judgment for robbing her of Ragotin, who had engaged to bring her back to her lodgings after the play, adding she was glad of the mischance that had befallen him for breaking his word. However, he heard nothing of this, being all the while in dispute with mine host, who threatened to make him pay the waste of his oats, and had already offered to beat his servant on the same account, who for that reason beat Ragotin, and called him a pettifogger. Angelica began to banter him in her turn, and reproached him with his infidelity to Madam Star.

In fine, Fortune showed plainly how little she was yet concerned in the promises made to Ragotin, of making him gain her affection to such a degree as would render him more happy than any lover in the whole country of Mayne—nay, Le Perche and Laval added. The oats were swept up again, and the actresses went into their chamber one by one, without any further misfortune. Ragotin did not follow them, nor can I tell exactly what became of him. Supper-time at last came, and to supper they went. After supper all withdrew to their respective apartments, and Destiny locked himself in with the actresses in order to pursue his story.

—"*The Comic Romance.*"

Paul Scarron

Strolling Players

Bright Phœbus had already run through about half his career; and his chariot, having passed the meridian and gone on the declivity of the sky, rolled on swifter than he desired. Had his horses been willing to have made use of the slope of their way, they might have finished the remainder of the day in less than half a quarter of an hour; but instead of pulling amain, they curveted about, sniffing brine in the air, which set them neighing, and made them sensible that they were near the sea, where their father is said to take his rest every night.

To speak more like a man and in plainer terms, it was between five and six of the clock, when a cart came into the market-place of the town of Mans. This cart was drawn by two yoke of lean oxen, led by a breeding mare, which had a colt that skipped to and fro like the silly creature that it was. The cart was laden with trunks, portmanteaus, and great packs of painted clothes, that made a sort of pyramid, on the top of which sat a damsel in a half-city, half-country dress. A young man, as poor in clothes as rich in mien, walked by the side of the cart. He had a great patch on his face (which covered one of his eyes and half of one cheek) and carried a long fowling-piece on his shoulder, with which he had murdered several magpies, jays, and crows, that, having strung together, made him a sort of bandoleer; at the end of it hung a hen and a goose which looked as if they had been taken from an enemy by way of plunder. Instead of a hat he wore a night-cap, tied about his head with garters of several colors, and which was

without doubt a kind of unfinished turban. His doublet was a griset-coat, girt about with a leather thong, which served likewise to support a rapier so very long that it could not be used dexterously without the help of a rest. He wore a pair of breeches tucked up to above the middle of his thighs, like those that players have when they represent an ancient hero. Instead of shoes he wore tragic buskins, bespattered with dirt up to the ankles. An old man, somewhat more regular in his dress, though in a very ordinary habit, walked by his side. He carried a bass-viol on his shoulders; and, because he stooped a little as he went, one might have taken him at a distance for a huge tortoise walking on its hind feet. Some critic or other will probably find fault with the comparison by reason of the disproportion between that creature and a man, but I speak of those great tortoises that are to be found in the Indies; and besides, I make bold to use the simile on my own authority. . . .

Let us return to our strolling company. They have passed by the tennis-court at the "Hind," before which were then assembled some of the chief men of the town. The novelty of our strollers' equipage and the noise of the mob, which had by this time gathered around the cart, drew the eyes of all those honorable burghers upon our unknown travelers. Among the rest was a sub-sheriff, La Rapinière by name; he, bearing the authority of a magistrate, asked them who they were. The young man whom I described before, without offering to pull off his turban (because with one hand he held his gun, and with the other the hilt of his sword, lest it should beat against his legs), answered him that they were French by birth and players by profession, that his stage-name was Destiny, his old comrade's Rancor, and the gentlewoman's (who sat roosting like a hen on the top of their baggage)

Cave. This odd name set some of the company laughing, whereupon the young player answered that the name of Cave ought not to seem more strange to men of sense than Mountain, Valley, Rose, or Thorn. The conversation ended with the same tumult of blows, cursing, and swearing as took place before the cart. The squabble had been occasioned by the servant of the tennis-court falling foul upon the carter without saying why or wherefore; yet the reason was that his mare and oxen had made too free with a truss of hay that lay before the door. However, the combatants were at length parted, and the mistress of the tennis-court, who liked to hear a play better than sermons or vespers, with marvelous generosity for the keeper of a tennis-court, bid the carter let his cattle eat their bellies full. . . .

La Rapinière renewed the conversation interrupted by the squabble, and asked the young player whether the company consisted only of Rancor, Cave, and himself. "Our company," answered he, "is as complete as that of the Prince of Orange, or of his Grace the Duke of Épernon; but through a misfortune that befell us at Tours, where our rattle-headed door-keeper happened to kill one of the men-at-arms of the governor of the province, we were forced to flee in a hurry, and in the sad pickle in which you see us. Had we but the keys of our trunks, we might entertain the town for four or five days." The player's answer made every one prick up his ears. La Rapinière offered an old gown of his wife's to Cave, and the tennis-woman two or three suits of clothes to Destiny and Rancor. "But," answered some of the bystanders, "there are only three of you." "No matter of that," replied Rancor, "for I once acted a whole play myself, and represented the king, queen, and the ambassador in my single person. I made use of a false treble tone when I impersonated the

queen; I spoke through the nose for the ambassador, addressing myself to the crown, which I placed upon a chair; and when I did the king, I resumed my seat, my crown, and my gravity, and lowered the key of my voice to a bass. Now to convince you of this, if you will satisfy our carter, defray our charges at the inn, and lend us what clothes you can spare, we will act before night; otherwise we must beg leave to refresh ourselves and rest, for we have come a great distance."—"*The Comic Romance.*"

François de la Rochefoucauld

Maxims and Sentences

A WOMAN is faithful to her first lover a long time—unless she happens to take a second.

He who is pleased with nobody is much more unhappy than he with whom nobody is pleased.

We all have sufficient fortitude to bear the misfortunes of our friends.

Had we no faults of our own, we should notice them with less pleasure in others.

We promise according to our hopes, and perform according to our fears.

Old men are fond of giving good advice to console themselves for their impotence to give bad examples.

We often do good in order that we may do evil with impunity.

If we resist our passions it is more from their weakness than from our strength.

We should have very little pleasure if we did not sometimes flatter ourselves.

It is easier to be wise for others than for ourselves.

Men would not live long in society if they were not dupes to each other.

Virtue would not travel so far if vanity did not keep her company.

Hypocrisy is the homage which vice renders to virtue.

In the adversity of our best friends we often find something which does not displease us.

Gravity is a mystery of the face, invented to conceal the defects of the mind.

Affected simplicity is refined imposture.

We often pardon those who weary us, but never those whom we weary.

There is no man who thinks himself in any of his qualities inferior to the man he esteems most in the world.

We take less pains to be happy than to appear so.

He who lives free from folly is less wise than he imagines.

Blaise Pascal

On Fasting

My friend spoke with much concern, for he is seriously afflicted at these disorders. For my own part I applauded the excellence of Jesuitical policy, and went immediately to one of their best casuists, with whom I wished at this moment to renew a former acquaintance. Knowing how to proceed, I had no difficulty in introducing and conducting the subject. Retaining his attachment to me, he welcomed me with a thousand expressions of kindness, and after some desultory conversation, I took occasion to make an inquiry respecting fasting, for the purpose of leading insensibly to the particular object of my solicitude. I stated how difficult I felt it. He exhorted me to resist my own disinclinations; but I persisting in my complaints, he became compassionate, and began to frame some excuses for me. Many which he offered did not exactly accord with my taste, till at length he asked if I could not sleep without supper. "No," said I; "in consequence of which I am obliged to breakfast at noon and to sup at night." "I am very happy," answered he, "that I have discovered an innocent method of relieving your anxiety; go, go, you are under no obligation to fast. However, do not depend on my word; come with me into the library."

I went. "Here, here," said he, taking up a book, "is your proof, and oh, what a noble one it is—furnished by Escobar!" "Who is Escobar?" "What, are you ignorant of the name of Escobar, of our society, who has compiled this moral theology from twenty-four of our fathers, who in his preface

compares this book to 'that of the Revelation, which was sealed with seven seals,' and says that Christ delivered it thus sealed to the four, Suarez, Vasquez, Molina, and Valentia, in the presence of four-and-twenty Jesuits, who represent the four-and-twenty elders?" When he turned to the passage respecting fasting. "See, see!" he exclaimed: "'Is he who cannot sleep without a supper obliged to fast? By no means.' Are you now satisfied?" "Not entirely so," replied I, "for I can fast pretty well by making a breakfast in the morning and a supper at night." "Oho, then, look at what follows; there is not a single consideration omitted: 'If a person can content himself with a breakfast in the morning and a supper at night'"—"That is exactly my case"—"'he is not obliged to fast; for no one is under any obligation to disarrange the order of his meals.'" "Good reason!" "But," continued he, "do you habitually drink much wine?" "No, father, I exceedingly dislike it." "I said this," added he, "simply to intimate that you might take it in the morning, or whenever you please without breaking your fast; and a glass of wine is always cheering." "May a person, without breaking his fast, drink wine at any hour he pleases, and in considerable quantities?" "He may, and a dram too. I did not recollect the dram," said he; "I must note it down in my memoranda." "Truly this Escobar," said I, "is a fine man." "Oh," rejoined he, "everybody admires him; he puts such lovely questions. Look again: 'If a man doubt whether he be of age, is he obliged to fast? No. But suppose I should come of age to-night, at an hour after midnight, and to-morrow is to be a fast, should I be obliged to fast to-morrow? No; for you may eat as much as you please from twelve to one, because you would not yet have completed twenty-one years; and so, having a right to break your fast, you are not obliged

to keep it.'" "Oh," said I, "what an agreeable publication!" "Indeed it is—one is never tired of it. I pass whole days and nights in reading it: I can actually think of nothing else."—"*Provincial Letters.*"

On Usury

"LET us," said my friend the casuist, "now speak about *men of business.* You are aware that our greatest difficulty with them is to prevent usury, for which purpose our fathers have exerted the utmost care; for such is their utter detestation of this vice, that Escobar says, 'that to affirm of usury it is no crime, is to be guilty of heresy'; and our Father Bauny, in his *Summary of Sins,* has filled a number of pages with an account of the punishments due to usurers. He pronounces them 'infamous when alive, and unworthy of burial when dead.'" "Indeed!" said I, "is Father Bauny so severe? I could not have imagined it." "It is so, however," said he, "when it is necessary; but then this learned casuist, observing that men are only induced to usury by the desire of gain, adds, in the same place, 'the world would be very much obliged if, guaranteeing them against the bad effects of usury, and at the same time against its guilt, some expedient could be adopted of legally procuring as much or more pecuniary profit than is obtained by usurious practises.'" "Undoubtedly, father; then we should not have any more usurers." "This he has accomplished by furnishing 'a general method for persons of every description, gentlemen, presidents, counselors,' etc.—and so easy, that it consists simply in pronouncing certain words when the money is lent, in conse-

quence of which the profit may be taken without being guilty of a usurious transaction, which it would be without such a precaution." "Pray, what are these mysterious words?" "Not at all mysterious; they are his own words, for you know that he wrote his *Summary of Sins* in French, as he says in his preface, 'to be understood by all mankind.' The person of whom you wish to borrow shall answer thus: 'I have no money to *lend,* though I have some, to be sure, to place out for an *honest and lawful profit.* If you wish to improve the sum you request by honest industry, by a co-partnership of half and half, possibly I might be induced to accommodate you. But as it is a troublesome affair to settle the profits of trade, if you will insure me a certain gain and my whole principal, without any risk, we shall agree the sooner; and, in fact, you shall have the money immediately.' Is not this an admirable method of acquiring money without committing sin? And has not Father Bauny good reason for saying in conclusion, 'By this means, in my opinion, a great number of people who, by usury, extortion, and illegal contracts, provoke the Divine indignation, may save themselves, and acquire good, honest, and lawful profits'?"

—"*Provincial Letters.*"

On Mental Reservations

"I PROCEED to the facilities we have invented for the avoidance of sin in the conversation and intrigues of the world. One of the most embarrassing things to provide against is *lying,* when it is the object to excite confidence in any false representation. In this case, our doctrine of *equivocals* is

of admirable service, by which, says Sanchez, 'it is lawful to use ambiguous terms to give the impression a different sense from that which you understand yourself." "This I am well aware of, father." "We have," continued he, "published it so frequently, that in fact everybody is acquainted with it; but pray, do you know what is to be done when no equivocal terms can be found?" "No, father." "Ha, I thought this would be new to you: it is the doctrine of *mental reservations.* Sanchez states it in the same place: 'A person may take an oath that he has not done such a thing, though in fact he has, by saying to himself, it was not done on a certain specified day or before he was born, or by concealing any other similar circumstance which gives another meaning to the statement. This is in numberless instances extremely convenient, and is always justifiable when it is necessary to your welfare, honor, or property.'"

"But, father, is not this adding perjury to lying?" "No; Sanchez and Filiutius show the contrary: "It is the *intention* which stamps the quality of the action;' and the latter furnishes another and surer method of avoiding lying. After saying in an audible voice, *I swear that I did not do this,* you may add inwardly, *to-day;* or after affirming aloud, *I swear,* you may repeat in a whisper, *I say;* and then resuming the former tone—*I did not do it.* Now this you must admit is telling the truth." "I own it is," said I; "but it is telling truth in a whisper, and a lie in an audible voice; besides, I apprehend that very few people have sufficient presence of mind to avail themselves of this deception." "Our fathers," answered the Jesuit, "have in the same place given directions for those who do not know how to manage these niceties, so that they may be indemnified against the sin of lying, while plainly declaring they have *not* done what in reality

they *have,* provided 'that, in general, they intended to give the same sense to their assertion which a skilful man would have contrived to do.'"

"Now confess," he asked, "have not you sometimes been embarrassed through an ignorance of this doctrine?" "Certainly." "And will you not admit, too, that it would often be very convenient to violate your word with a good conscience?" "Surely, one of the most convenient things in the world!" "Then, sir, listen to Escobar; he gives this general rule: 'Promises are not obligatory when a man has no intention of being bound to fulfil them; and it seldom happens that he has such an intention, unless he confirms it by an oath or bond, so that when he merely says *I will do it,* it is to be understood *if he do not change his mind;* for he did not intend by what he promised to deprive himself of his liberty.' He furnishes some other rules which you may read for yourself, and concludes thus: 'Everything is taken from Molina and our other authors—*omnia ex Molina et aliis;*' it is, consequently, indisputable."

"Father," exclaimed I, "I never knew before that the direction of the intention could nullify the obligation of a promise." "Now, then," said he, "you perceive this very much facilitates the intercourse of mankind."

—"*Provincial Letters.*"

Jean de la Fontaine

The Fox, the Wolf, and the Horse

A FOX, though young, by no means raw,
Had seen a horse—the first he ever saw.
"Ho! neighbor wolf," said he to one quite green,
"A creature in our meadow I have seen—
    Sleek, grand! I seem to see him yet—
    The finest beast I ever met."
    "Is he a stouter one than we?"
    The wolf demanded eagerly.
    "Some picture of him let me see."
"If I could paint," said fox, "I should delight
T' anticipate your pleasure at the sight;
But come, who knows? perhaps it is a prey
    By fortune offered in our way."
  They went. The horse, turn'd loose to graze,
  Not liking much their looks or ways,
    Was just about to gallop off.
"Sir," said the fox, "your humble servants, we
Make bold to ask you what your name may be."
    The horse, an animal with brains enough,
Replied, "Sirs, you yourselves may read my name;
My shoer round my heel hath writ the same."
The fox excused himself for want of knowledge:
  "Me, sir, my parents did not educate—
  So poor a hole was their entire estate.
My friend, the wolf, however, taught at college,

Could read it were it even Greek."
The wolf, to flattery weak,
Approach'd, to verify the boast;
For which four teeth he lost.
The high-raised hoof came down with such a blow
As laid him bleeding on the ground full low.
"My brother," said the fox, "this shows how just
What once was taught me by a fox of wit—
Which on thy jaws this animal hath writ—
'All unknown things the wise mistrust.'"

—"*Fables.*"

The Council of the Rats

Old Rodilard, a certain cat,
Such havoc of the rats had made,
'Twas difficult to find a rat
With Nature's debt unpaid.
The few that did remain,
To leave their holes afraid,
From usual food abstain,
Not eating half their fill.
And wonder no one will,
That one, who made on rats his revel,
With rats passed not for cat, but devil.
Now, on a day, this dread rat-eater,
Who had a wife, went out to meet her;
And while he held his caterwauling,
The unkilled rats, their chapter calling,
Discussed the point, in grave debate,
How they might shun impending fate.

Their dean, a prudent rat,
Thought best, and better soon than late,
To bell the fatal cat;
That, when he took his hunting-round,
The rats, well cautioned by the sound,
Might hide in safety underground.
Indeed, he knew no other means.
And all the rest
At once confessed
Their minds were with the dean's.
No better plan, they all believed,
Could possibly have been conceived;
No doubt, the thing would work right well,
If any one would hang the bell.
But, one by one, said every rat,
"I'm not so big a fool as that."
The plan knocked up in this respect,
The council closed without effect.
And many a council I have seen,
Or reverend chapter with its dean,
That, thus resolving wisely,
Fell through like this precisely.

To argue or refute,
Wise counselors abound;
The man to execute
Is harder to be found.

—*"Fables."*

The Crow and the Fox

A MASTER crow, perched on a tree one day,
Was holding in his beak a piece of cheese.
A master fox, by th' odor drawn that way,
Spake unto him in words like these:
"Good-morning, my Lord Crow!
How well you look, how handsome you do grow!
Upon my honor, if your note
Bears a resemblance to your coat,
You are the phœnix of the dwellers in these woods."
At these words does the crow exceedingly rejoice;
And, to display his beauteous voice,
He opens a wide beak, lets fall his stolen goods.
The fox seized on't, and said, "My dear good sir,
Learn you that every flatterer
Lives at the expense of him who hears him out.
This lesson is well worth some cheese, no doubt."
The crow, ashamed, and much in pain,
Swore, but a little late, they'd not catch him again.

—*"Fables."*

The Peasant's Choice of Punishment

ONCE on a time, as hist'ry's page relates,
A lord, possessed of many large estates,
Was angry with a poor and humble clod,
Who tilled his grounds and feared his very nod.

Th' offense (as often happens) was but small,
But on him, vowed the peer, his rage should fall.
Said he, "A halter, rascal, you deserve;
You'll never from the gallows-turnpike swerve.
Or, soon or late, you *swinging* will be found;
Who, born for hanging, ever yet was drowned?
Howe'er you'll smile to hear my lenient voice;
Observe, three punishments await your choice;
Take which you will. The first is, you shall eat,
Of strongest garlic, thirty heads complete;
No drink you'll have between, nor sleep, nor rest;
You know a breach of promise I detest.
Or, on your shoulders further I propose,
To give you, with a cudgel, thirty blows.
Or, if more pleasing, that you truly pay
The sum of thirty pounds without delay."

The peasant 'gan to turn things in his mind.
Said he, "To take the heads I'm not inclined;
No drink, you say, between—that makes it worse;
To eat the garlic thus, would prove a curse.
Nor can I suffer on my tender back,
That, with a cudgel, thirty blows you thwack."
Still harder thirty pounds to pay appeared.
Uncertain how to act, he hanging feared.
The noble peer he begged, upon his knees,
His penitence to hear, and sentence ease.
But mercy dwelled not with the angry lord.
"Is this," he cried, "the answer? Bring a cord."
The peasant, trembling lest his life was sought,
The garlic chose, which presently was brought.

Upon a dish my lord the number told;
Clod no way liked the garlic to behold.
With piteous mien the garlic head he took,
Then on it num'rous ways was led to look,
And, grumbling much, began to spit and eat,
Just like a cat with mustard on her meat;
To touch it with his tongue he durst not do.
He knew not how to act or what pursue.
The peer, delighted at the man's distress,
The garlic made him bite, and chew, and press,
Then gulp it down as if delicious fare.
The first he passed; the second made him swear;
The third he found was every whit as sad.
He wished the devil had it, 'twas so bad.
In short, when at the twelfth our wight arrived,
He thought his mouth and throat of skin deprived.
Said he, "Some drink I earnestly entreat!"
"What, Greg'ry," cried my lord, "dost feel a heat?
In thy repasts dost love to wet thy jaws?
Well! well! I won't object; thou know'st my laws.
Much good may't do thee. Here, some wine, some wine!
Yet recollect, to drink, since you design,
That afterward, my friend, you'll have to choose
The thirty blows, or thirty pounds to lose."
"But," cried the peasant, "I sincerely pray
Your lordship's goodness, that the garlic may
Be taken in the account, for as to pelf,
Where can an humble lab'rer, like myself,
Expect the sum of thirty pounds to seize?"
"Then," said the peer, "be cudgeled if you please.
Take thirty thwacks; for naught the garlic goes."
To moisten well his throat, and ease his woes,

The peasant drank a copious draft of wine,
And then to bear the cudgel would resign.

A single blow he patiently endured;
The second, howsoe'er, his patience cured;
The third was more severe, and each was worse.
The punishment he now began to curse.
Two lusty wights, with cudgels thrashed his back,
And regularly gave him thwack and thwack.
He cried, he roared, for grace he begged his lord,
Who marked each blow, and would no ease accord;
But carefully observed, from time to time,
That lenity he always thought sublime;
His gravity preserved; considered too
The blows received and what continued due.

At length, when Greg'ry twenty strokes had got,
He piteously exclaimed, "If more's my lot
I never shall survive! Oh! pray forgive,
If you desire, my lord, that I should live."
"Then down with thirty pounds," replied the peer.
"Since you the blows so much pretend to fear,
I'm sorry for you; but if all the gold
Be not prepared, your godfather, I'm told,
Can lend a part. Yet, since so far you've been,
To flinch the rest you surely won't be seen."

The wretched peasant to his lordship flew,
And trembling, cried, "'Tis up! The number view!"
A scrutiny was made, which nothing gained;
No choice but pay the money now remained.

This grieved him much, and o'er the fellow's face,
The dewy drops were seen to flow apace.
All useless proved. The full demand he sent,
With which the peer expressed himself content.
Unlucky he whoe'er his lord offends!
To golden ore, howe'er, the proud man bends.

'Twas vain that Gregorgy a pardon prayed.
For trivial faults the peasant dearly paid:
His throat inflamed—his tender back well beat—
His money gone—and all to make complete,
Without the least deduction for the pain,
The blows and garlic gave the trembling swain.

—"*Tales.*"

Philippe Quinault

Two Imaginative Innkeepers

CARPALIN, COURCAILLET, *and* CLÉANDRE.

Carp. Would you drink of the best, sir, step in here. We are not wanting for strong wine of Orleans, Malmsey, Burgundy, and exquisite cordials from the valleys of the Rhone.

Cour. Sir, here you can drink, too, the wine of Malaga and Contepordrix, and Muscatelle sweeter than nectar.

Carp. Yes, he has drafts for you, no doubt, wine of Nanterre and wine of Argenteuil. Lean cat that he is, he'll treat you well—with vinegar.

Cour. It's better than yours.

Carp. Keeper of a mere cook-shop you are; an adulterer of wine who spoils the trade.

Cour. Oh, you frying-pan hero!

Carp. Insolent slave!

Cour. Sir, come to my inn. That fellow is a sharper.

Carp. If you don't get away from here I'll smash your snout.

Cléan. Gentlemen, keep peace.

Carp. You come in here, or I'll sweep the ground with you.

Cléan. You do not please me with your importunities. You have already torn my coat in several places.

Carp. If I get a stick—— (*Exit* COURCAILLET.)

Cléan. Well, but don't make so much ado. The people on the street are watching the fuss. I'll go in here.

Carp. Now, sir, you are talking sensibly. It is undoubtedly at the "Black Head" that fashionable people stop to drink.

Cléan. I care little for wine. Have you anything to eat?

Carp. Assuredly. We furnish the most delectable delicacies, seen only on the best tables—dishes exquisitely made and well spiced.

Cléan. Well, one of these I should like.

Carp. Pigeons on toast and partridges in pies, with herbs and spices, marrow, and roasts of beef crowned with citron and jelly.

Cléan. Enough, enough!

Carp. We know how to make dainty dishes of veal in a royal manner, pigeons and chickens——

Cléan. But I want only one dish!

Carp. You can have four. It's only a matter of cost. You'll be as well served here as in the best inn in France. To the soups I give a flavor, I tell you—I have skilful hands enough, thank Heaven!

Cléan. You have some smaller dish to begin on?

Carp. Of course! We have tongues of beef, hashed chickens with white sauce, sheep's feet with ham, and minced meat with crusts. Then, for the middle of the dinner, come capons and hens, pheasants and turtle-doves, woodcocks and partridges, ducks and plovers, teals and thrushes, snipes, curlews, wild ducks, peewits——

Cléan. Oh, my dear host, stop, stop, I beseech you!

Carp. In a word, in this inn nothing is lacking. Fruit would you have? The orchards of Touraine have yielded their wealth to me. Do you wish to dispense with meat for

a day? We give you soups of green peas, onions, asparagus, and rice, then salmon, turbot, trout, or sole, fried or stewed——

Cléan. Another day, my friend, another day! Oh, but I'm hungry!—"*The Indiscreet Lover.*"

Edmé Boursault

The Quack Practises

DOCTOR CRISPIN *and* FERNAND.

Cris. Pythagorus, Plato, Pancras, Hesiod, Cato——

Fer. What is this learned man saying? I'll listen.

Cris. Vergil, Alexander, Lucullus——

Fer. Ye gods!

Cris. Scipio Africanus, Jodelet, Mascarille, Aristotle, Lucian—physicians of Cæsar, slayers of Alexander, you behold before you a phenix sprung from your ashes.

Fer. Can he be a physician? He talks like one.

Cris. Approach, ye great masters of learning, and behold the mysteries that medicine unfolds!

Fer. He is a doctor, to be sure.

Cris. Come and behold the herb of the Arabian sea——

Fer. Sir!

Cris. Listen to me. *Ego sum medicus.* I am a past-master of the art medicinal, a diciple of Hippocrates. I can give balms and antidotes; by means of this most noble art I can predict that he who dies of fever in February will not be ill in March; that the year consists of four seasons; that blindness destroys the sight——

Fer. I do not doubt your rare knowledge. If I might dare to request——

Cris. What? Speak!

Fer. That you visit my daughter, whose life we despair of.

Cris. You have a daughter? It follows, then, that you are her father.

Fer. Yes, sir, and I fear that she will die.

Cris. Is she very ill?

Fer. Very.

Cris. She does wrong. I would advise her to stop it. Nothing may dominate us without becoming our complete master, and disease by its secret methods corrupts the flesh and destroys the body. The patient desirous of purifying himself must give his nature a lift. The vapor of the earth, opposed to illness, creates a channel through the frame. The cold Cancer renders the illness silent, the brave Zodiac faces Saturn, and if one agrees with these signs, it is clear that nothing so shortens life as death. These are the lessons that my authors have taught me. By the way, is your daughter dead?

Fer. No, sir.

Cris. Does she take food?

Fer. A little, thank Heaven!

Cris. Then she is not dead.

Fer. No, no!

Cris. So much the better. I am glad of it.

Fer. Glad of what? Before the day is over her life may fade out.

Cris. So much the worse. Has she been seen by a physician?

Fer. No.

Cris. Then it is an evil design of hers to die without the proper ceremonies. Our school of medicine looks with suspicion upon all such. When a man is about to die, he should always have a physician to aid him in the process. Whoever takes it into his head to die without the proper forms of

procedure causes a scandal. Inform your daughter, therefore, that she must not think of dying before I have seen her.

Enter LISE.

Lise. Ah, sir, your daughter is very ill.

Fer. How does she show it? I tremble.

Lise. She complains of her stomach. She finds no rest at all—gets up, lies down, and rises again. (*Seeing* CRISPIN.) Is that fellow a beggar?

Fer. No! He is the most perfect representative of the medical science I have been fortunate enough to meet.

Lise. A physician?

Cris. Certainly. My robe shows you that. But let us lose no time in putting my art to the test. Take me to the patient.

. . . . . .

LUCRESSE, FERNAND, CRISPIN, *and* LISE.

Lucr. Oh, father!

Fer. My child!

Lise. Courage!

Lucr. I am dying!

Cris. I find you looking fairly well. Your humble servant. If my remedies prove vain, still you will have the satisfaction of dying under competent hands. So console yourself.

Lucr. Alas!

Cris. Let me feel your pulse, that I may ascertain whether death is really in such a hurry for you. (*Instead of taking the wrist of* LUCRESSE, *he takes her father's.*) Dear

me, how your pulse beats. I dislike telling you, but undoubtedly your disease is mortal. Take care.

Fer. Oh, Lord! what terrible news! Am I so ill as that?

Cris. You? How so?

Fer. It was my pulse that you felt!

Cris. And does that astonish you? Extreme tenderness makes one of father and daughter. Between them nature has established so close a relation that, though the personalities are two, the current of their blood is one; they are echoes of each other's maladies, and the child's illness is evident in the father.

Fer. How true!

Cris. Nevertheless, although my knowledge shines brightly even now, I will resolve to feel your daughter's pulse.

Lucr. Here it is.

Cris. I suspected it. Nothing ails you except too much blood. Without that——

Lucr. But, sir, do you not see how near death I am?

Cris. Let me feel your pulse again. Have you fever?

Lucr. I don't know.

Cris. No?

Lucr. No.

Cris. Fie!

Fer. At what?

Cris. Bad management. If she does not even know it, how can she be anything but very ill. Do you see?

Fer. Oh, that I knew the cause of her illness!

Cris. It's fever. Nothing else. But, whether it be fever or gangrene or a fit, I know very well how to cure her.

Fer. (*to* Lise). Get pen and ink!

Cris. What for?

Fer. To write your prescription.

Cris. Nonsense, nonsense! I have it all ready. I carry one for every event—for the eyes, for the teeth. But, since she is ignorant of the nature of her disease, she certainly needs a prescription suitable to all the diseases among which hers may be found.—"*The Flying Physician.*"

Nicolas Boileau

Annoyances of Paris

HEAVENS, what makes the air resound with these mournful cries? Is it to lie awake that one goes to bed in Paris? What angry demon brings the cats from all the gutters to this spot, night after night, in all eternity? It is in vain that I jump from my bed full of worry and fright; it seems as though all hell had come with them to visit me. One mews in a growling bass like a furious tiger; another rolls its voice like a screaming child. But that is not everything. To keep me awake, the rats and mice seem to have come to an understanding with the cats. More importunate are they to me, during the dark night, than ever in full day that wonderful bore, the Abbé Pure. . . .

But if at Paris I cannot find rest in bed, it becomes a thousand times worse when I venture out of doors. Whatever place I go to, I must fight against the ceaseless, antlike swarm of importunates. One runs a plank against me until I am one large bruise—a glance shows me my hat turned inside out. Here a funeral procession advances to the church with mournful steps, and farther off quarreling lackeys make the dogs bark and the people swear. There pavers interrupt my passage; yonder I am warned away from a house that is being repaired. Workmen creeping about on the roof of a house pour down a plentiful rain of slate and tiles, while over there comes a tottering beam on a cart, threatening danger. Six horses harnessed to the heavy load can scarcely drag it over the slippery pavement. In

turning round the beam becomes entangled in the wheel of a carriage, overturning it in a heap of mire, when another vehicle, passing there at the same moment, is embarrassed by the same rude embrace. Soon twenty carriages arrive in single file, followed apparently by a thousand others; and, to crown these evils, a mischievous fate brings a troop of oxen to the same place. Every one tries to get through this moil; one groans, another swears, and the mule-bells swell the uproar. But at that moment a hundred horses come into the crowd, and destroy all remnants of order. Everywhere the pedestrians form brigades, and soon you have barricades in the time of peace. One hears nothing but a clamor of confused cries, and God thunders in vain to make Himself heard. And I, who should have gone to a certain place, seeing the day decline, and weary of waiting, not knowing what saint's protection to implore—I see myself in danger of being broken on the wheel. I jump over twenty rivers of rain, I slip through, I push on, when a physician riding on horseback knocks me down; so that, daring no longer to appear anywhere in the state in which I now am, without thinking of the way, I make off as best I can.—"*The Satires.*"

To Perrault

How comes it, Perrault, I would gladly know,
That authors of two thousand years ago,
Whom in their native dress all times revere,
In your translations should so flat appear?
'Tis you divest them of their own sublime,
By your vile crudities and odious rime.

They're thine when suffering thy wretched phrase,
And then no wonder if they meet no praise.

On Cotin

Of all the pens which my poor rimes molest,
Cotin's is sharpest, and succeeds the best.
Others outrageous scold and rail downright,
With hearty rancor, and true Christian spite.
But he, a readier method does design,
Writes scoundrel verses, and then says they're mine.

Brueys and Palaprat

The Trial for Sheep-Stealing

JUDGE BARTOLIN, ADVOCATE PATELIN, GUILLAUME, *and* AGNELET.

Bart. Let the parties appear.

Pat. (*aside to* AGNELET). When you are questioned, answer exactly as I told you.

Bart. (*to* PATELIN). Who is that man?

Pat. A shepherd who was beaten by his master, and who must, in consequence, be trepanned after the hearing of his case.

Bart. We must wait for our opponents, for his attorney, or advocate. But what does M. Guillaume want with us?

Guil. (*to* BARTOLIN). I am going to plead my cause myself.

Pat. (*aside to* AGNELET). Oh! traitor! it's against M. Guillaume.

Agn. Yes; he's my excellent master!

Pat. Let us try to get out of this.

Guil. Ah! who is that man?

Pat. Sir, I never plead except against an advocate.

Guil. I have no need of an advocate. (*Aside.*) He looks something like him.

Pat. In that case I must retire.

Bart. Stay and plead.

Pat. But, sir——

Bart. Stay, I say. I wish at any rate to have an advocate in my audience. If you go, I'll strike you off the register.

Pat. (*aside, concealing his face with his handkerchief*). We must conceal our identity as best we can.

Bart. M. Guillaume, you are the plaintiff; speak.

Guil. You must know, sir, that this rascal——

Bart. No bad names.

Guil. Very well. This thief——

Bart. Call him by his name, or by that of his profession.

Guil. Well, anyhow, sir, I tell you that this rascal of a shepherd stole twenty-six of my sheep.

Pat. That is not proved.

Bart. What's the matter with you, advocate?

Pat. A terrible toothache.

Bart. So much the worse. Proceed.

Guil. By Jove, that advocate rather resembles the hero of my six ells of cloth.

Bart. What proof have you of the theft?

Guil. What proof! Why, I sold him yesterday—I trusted him with six ells, six hundred sheep, and I find only eighty in the flock.

Pat. I beg to deny that fact.

Guil. (*aside*). If I hadn't first seen the other man delirious, I should be sure this was my man.

Bart. Never mind your man, but prove the fact.

Guil. I prove it by my cloth—I mean by my ledger. What has become of the six ells, of the twenty-six sheep missing from my flock?

Pat. There's no doubt that it is himself. *Non est quæstio de persona.* You were informed that the sheep had died of disease. What have you to say to that?

Guil. With all due respect, it's false. He carried off under

—he killed them to sell, and yesterday I myself— (*Aside.*) Yes, it's he. (*To* BARTOLIN.) I sold him six—six—I took him in the act, at night, of killing a sheep.

Pat. (*to* BARTOLIN). A pure invention, sir, to excuse himself for the blows he gave the poor shepherd, who, as I told you before, must be trepanned after the trial.

Guil. (*to* BARTOLIN). By all the gods! your lordship, it's perfectly true, it is himself, yes. He carried off six ells of cloth from my house yesterday, and this morning, instead of paying me the thirty crowns——

Bart. What the devil have six ells of cloth and thirty crowns to do with the matter? The case before us is, I believe, one of stolen sheep.

Guil. Quite true, sir. That is another affair, and we shall come to it later on. But I am not mistaken. Know, then, that I hid myself in the sheepfold. (*Aside.*) Yes, it's certainly he. (*To* BARTOLIN.) I hid myself in the sheepfold, and saw that fellow enter. He took a fat sheep, and his fine words were so successful that he carried off six ells——

Bart. Six ells of sheep?

Guil. No, of cloth, curse the fellow!

Bart. Never mind the cloth and the man, but come back to your sheep.

Guil. Very well, I come back. The fellow, having drawn his knife out of his pocket—I mean my cloth—no, I'm right, his knife—he—he—he—he—put it like this under his gown, and carried it off home; and this morning, instead of paying me my thirty crowns, he refused me both cloth and money. Now, is that right?

Pat. (*laughing*). Ha! ha! ha!

Bart. To your sheep, I say, to your sheep.

Pat. (*laughing*). Ha! ha! ha!

Bart. But you're out of your mind, M. Guillaume; you're dreaming!

Pat. You see, sir, he doesn't know what he's saying.

Guil. Indeed, I know perfectly, sir. He stole twenty-six sheep; and this morning, instead of giving me thirty crowns for six ells of chestnut-color cloth, he paid me with blue devils, the nymph Calypso, ta ral la, my gossip when I dance. How the deuce am I to know what he'll offer me next?

Pat. Ha! ha! ha! He's mad, he's mad!

Bart. Undoubtedly. Stop, M. Guillaume! Not all the courts of justice in the kingdom together could make anything of your case. You accuse this shepherd of stealing twenty-six sheep, and you mix up with it six ells of cloth, thirty crowns, blue devils, and countless fooleries besides. Once again, come back to your sheep, or I shall set the shepherd free. But it would be better for me to question him. (*To* AGNELET.) Come here; what is your name?

Agn. Baa.

Guil. He lies; his name is Agnelet.

Bart. Agnelet or Baa, it's all the same. (*To* AGNELET.) Tell me, is it true that M. Guillaume trusted you with twenty-six sheep?

Agn. Baa.

Bart. Perhaps the fear of the law upsets you. Listen, and don't be afraid. Did M. Guillaume find you one night killing a sheep?

Agn. Baa.

Bart. What's the meaning of this?

Pat. The blows on his head have unsettled his brain.

Bart. You are greatly to blame, M. Guillaume.

Guil. I to blame! One man steals my cloth, another my

sheep, one pays me in songs, another in baas, and then, curse it, I'm to blame!

Bart. Why, certainly. You should never strike a man, and especially on the head.

Guil. Oh! that's all very well. It was dark, and when I strike, I'm not particular where.

Pat. He confesses. Sir, *habemus confitentem rerum.*

Guil. Oh, be off with your *confitareum!* You shall pay me for the six ells of cloth, or the devil take you.

Bart. The cloth again! You are flouting justice. Out of the court and the suit, without costs.

Guil. I appeal; and as for you, you rogue, we shall see.

(*Exit.*)

Pat. (*to* AGNELET). Thank his lordship.

Agn. Baa, baa.

Bart. Poor wretch—there, that will do. Go and get yourself trepanned at once. (*Exit.*)

Pat. Now that by my skill I've got you out of an affair which might have ended in the gallows, it's your turn to pay me as handsomely as you promised.

Agn. Baa.

Pat. Yes, you played your part very well. But now, do you understand, I want my money.

Agn. Baa.

Pat. Oh! leave off baaing, do; there's no more need of it. There's no one here but you and me. Are you going to keep your promise, and pay me well?

Agn. Baa.

Pat. You rascal! Am I to be the dupe of a dressed-up sheep? By all the devils you shall pay me, or——

(AGNELET *rushes out.*)

—*"The Advocate Patelin."*

René le Sage

The Archbishop's Veracious Secretary

I HAD been in the afternoon to fetch my baggage and horse from the inn where I had lodged; after which I returned to supper at the palace, where I found a very handsome chamber, and a down bed, prepared for me. The archbishop ordered me to be called early next morning, and gave me a homily to transcribe, enjoining me to copy it with all possible exactness. This I performed minutely, without having forgot either accent, point, or comma; so that the joy he expressed was mingled with surprise. "Good heavens!" cried he in a transport, when he had surveyed all the sheets of my copy, "was anything so correct ever seen? You transcribe so well that you must certainly understand grammar. Tell me frankly, my friend, have you found nothing that shocked you in writing it over? Some neglect, perhaps, in the style, or improper term?" "Oh, sir," answered I, with an air of modesty, "I am not learned enough to make critical observations; and if I were, I am persuaded that the works of your Grace would escape my censure." The prelate smiled at my reply; and, though he said nothing, discovered, through all his piety, that he was a fine author.

By this kind of flattery I entirely gained his good graces, became more and more dear to him every day; and at length understood from Don Fernando, who visited him very often, that I was so much beloved I might look upon my fortune as already made. This my master himself confirmed to me, a little time after, on the following occasion. One evening

he repeated in his closet, when I was present, with great enthusiasm, an homily which he intended to pronounce the next day in the cathedral, and, not satisfied with asking my opinion of it in general, obliged me to single out the particular passages which I most admired. I had the good luck to mention those that he himself looked upon to be the best, his own favorite bits; by which means I passed, in his judgment, for a man who had a delicate knowledge of the true beauties of a work. "This is," cried he, "what is called having taste and sentiment; well, friend, I assure you you've not got Bœotian ears." In a word, he was so well satisfied with me, that he pronounced with some vivacity, "Gil Blas, henceforth give yourself no uneasiness about your fortune; I undertake to make it extremely agreeable; I like you; and, as a proof of my affection, make you my confidant."

I no sooner heard these words than I fell at his Grace's feet, quite overcome with gratitude; I heartily embraced his bandy legs, and looked upon myself as a man on the highway to wealth and opulence. "Yes, my child," resumed the archbishop, whose talk had been interrupted by my prostration, "you shall be the repository of my most secret thoughts. Listen with attention to what I am going to say. My chief pleasure consists in preaching; the Lord gives a blessing to my homilies; they touch the hearts of sinners, make them seriously reflect on their conduct, and have recourse to repentance. I have sometimes the satisfaction to see a miser, terrified by the images which I represent to his avarice, open his treasures, and lavish them with a generous hand. I have also torn, as it were, the epicurean from his pleasures, filled hermitages with the sons of ambition, and confirmed in her duty the wife who has been shaken by the allurements of a seducing lover. These conversions, which are frequent,

ought of themselves to excite my study; nevertheless, I will confess my weakness; I propose another reward to myself, a reward which the delicacy of my virtue reproaches me with in vain! I mean the esteem that the world shows for fine, polished writing. The honor of being reckoned a perfect orator has charmed my imagination; my performances are thought equally strong and delicate; but I would, of all things, avoid the fault of good authors who write too long, and retire without forfeiting the least tittle of my reputation. Wherefore, my dear Gil Blas," continued the prelate, "one thing that I exact of your zeal is, whenever you shall perceive my pen to smack of old age, and my genius to flag, don't fail to advise me of it; for I don't trust to my own judgment, which may be seduced by self-love. That observation must proceed from a disinterested understanding, and I make choice of yours, which I know is good, resolved to stand by your decision." . . .

In the very zenith of my favor, we had a hot alarm in the episcopal palace; the archbishop was seized with a fit of apoplexy; he was, however, succored immediately, and such salutary medicines administered, that in a few days his health was re-established; but his understanding had received a rude shock, which I plainly perceived in the very next discourse which he composed. I did not, however, find the difference between this and the rest so sensible as to make me conclude that the orator began to flag; and waited for another homily to fix my resolution. This indeed was quite decisive; sometimes the good old prelate repeated the same thing over and over; sometimes rose too high, or sunk too low: it was a vague discourse, the rhetoric of an old professor, a mere capuchinade.

I was not the only person who took notice of this; the

greatest part of the audience, when he pronounced it, as if they had been also hired to examine it, said softly to one another, "This sermon smells strong of apoplexy." Come, master homily-critic (said I then to myself), prepare to do your office; you see that his Grace begins to fail: it is your duty to give him notice of it, not only as the depositor of his thoughts, but likewise lest some one of his friends should be free enough with him to forestall you.

The only thing that embarrassed me was how to break the ice. Luckily the orator himself extricated me from that difficulty by asking what people said of him, and if they were satisfied with his last discourse. I answered that his homilies were always admired, but, in my opinion, the last had not succeeded so well as the rest in affecting the audience. "How, friend!" replied he with astonishment; "has it met with any Aristarchus?" "No, sir," said I, "by no means; such works as yours are not to be criticized; everybody is charmed with them. Nevertheless, since you have laid your injunctions upon me to be free and sincere, I will take the liberty to tell you that your last discourse, in my judgment, has not altogether the energy of your other performances. Are not you of the same opinion?"

My master grew pale at these words, and said with a forced smile, "So then, Master Gil Blas, this piece is not to your taste?" "I don't say so, sir," cried I, disconcerted. "I think it excellent, although a little inferior to your other works." "I understand you," he replied; "you think I flag, don't you? Come, be plain; you believe it is time for me to think of retiring." "I should not have been so bold," said I, "as to speak so freely, if your Grace had not commanded me. I do no more, therefore, than obey you; and I most humbly beg that you will not be offended at my free-

dom." "God forbid," cried he immediately, "God forbid that I should find fault with it. In so doing, I should be very unjust. I don't at all take it ill that you speak your sentiment; it is your sentiment only that I find bad. I have been most egregiously deceived by your narrow understanding."

Though I was disconcerted, I endeavored to find some mitigation, in order to set things to rights again; but how is it possible to appease an incensed author, one especially who has been accustomed to hear himself praised? "Say no more, my child," said he; "you are yet too raw to make proper distinctions. Know that I never composed a better homily than that which you disapprove; for my genius (thank Heaven) has, as yet, lost nothing of its vigor. Henceforth I will make a better choice of a confidant, and keep one of greater ability than you. Go," added he, pushing me by the shoulder out of his closet, "go tell my treasurer to give you a hundred ducats, and may Heaven bless you. Good-by, Master Gil Blas, I wish you all manner of prosperity, and a little better taste."—"*Gil Blas.*"

The Universal Fire Cure

I WAS perfectly astonished that any person should be so foolish as to place himself under my Uncle Damien's hands; for he was bigoted in the practise of the ancients, and followed their precepts with scrupulous precision and severity.

A few instances of his mode of practise, in particular cases, will completely exhibit his professional character. In venesection, he made the incision transversely; and to close the

orifice, either choked the vein with a silk cord, or cauterized the wound with a red-hot iron. To relieve a patient from the pangs of the gout, he made punctures on the afflicted part with needles put together in the form of a brush, and dissipated all scrofulous swellings by pricking the parts with the sharp points that grow on a thorn-back's tail. A nasal hemorrhage he stopped by making a transverse incision from one part of the forehead to the other, or rather two incisions, in the shape of St. Andrew's Cross, all round the hairy part of the head. The most powerful caustics were constantly applied to the hip, loins, and thighs to remove sciaticas; and he banished a headache by placing red-hot irons on each side of the nostrils, temples, cheeks, and under the chin. The element of fire, in short, was his grand specific for the cure of every disorder; and the belly, legs, and thighs of dropsical persons were fried or broiled without mercy. But, as it sometimes happened, whenever a refractory patient obstinately refused to try the effect of these salutary ordeals, he humanely accommodated his practise to the weakness of the patient; and, under pretense of employing a more anodyne remedy than fire, he scalded the flesh with hot water or boiling oil, unless they preferred being singed with ignified sulfur, spirits of wine, gunpowder, melted lead, or liquefied glass.

This able professor, anxious to instruct me in all the mysteries of the healing art, frequently carried me off with him when he had any grand operation to perform; but, instead of affording information to my mind, he tortured every feeling of my heart. I am sure that I should have endured, without complaining, all the pains that can afflict mankind, rather than have undergone the mildest of his remedies. He was, however, principal surgeon to the hospital of Murcia,

where I constantly attended him, to learn this art of broiling people into health.

Leaving me one morning by the bedside of a man who had been broiled in various ways for the dropsy, the unhappy sufferer entreated me with doleful cries to give him a drop of water, to assuage the raging thirst by which he was devoured. The heart of a surgeon should be inexorable to the cries of his patient, but, unable to resist the affecting entreaty which was made to me upon this occasion, I presented to his lips a large jug half full of water, which he seized with avidity between his hands, and emptied in a moment. No sooner, however, had I afforded him this comfort than he fainted away, and by an almost instantaneous death gained perfect relief from all his complaints.

—*"Vanillo Gonzales."*

Dialogue Between Two Chimneys

CHIMNEY E *and* CHIMNEY F.

E. Pray tell me, if you please, good neighbor F, how you can, without being tired, put up with having nobody besides your two old maids? For from morning till night no one comes near your fireside; you have always the same people, and always the same subject of conversation. Indeed, I should imagine that by this time your patience was worn out.

F. I must indeed own to you that I often wish they would change their quarters; though, perhaps, in that case, I should be hard put to it how to breathe, as, in all probability, I should not have so good a fire; for they are extremely pious, so, of consequence, take no less care of their bodies than of

their souls, especially when a certain abbot, whom I could name, comes to visit them. Then they spare no cost; their kitchen then may vie with that of a lord, and the smoke I breathe upon is veritable perfume.

E. As far as I perceive, you like nothing but smoke. Well, every one to their own tastes; I like variety. New faces and new adventures are my delight. I am, as I suppose you know, the chimney of a furnished lodging.

F. And as such it is very fortunate for you that you have a taste for variety.

E. I have so great a taste that way, that I should be extremely sorry to see the same lodger for six months together; and I have reason to be thankful that it has never happened to me since the first moment of my existence.

F. Belike, then, you are not the oldest of your neighborhood.

E. No, not by a great deal; but, for all that, I believe I have the most experience.

F. Tell me some of your adventures; I beg you to do it, to oblige a neighbor.

E. With all my heart, if it will not tire you. I will begin from the time I first commenced chimney. He who first sat down by my fire was the younger son of a good family, but of a country where the portion of younger sons consists only in their sword, joined to a happy impudence of bullying every one with their being born gentlemen. This talent my gentleman possessed in an eminent degree. But he had another at the same time which was much more profitable; for he played with constant good luck, and his good luck was the effect of the most assiduous study; every day he was busy in calculating the various chances upon the cards, and at night put his theory into practise.

F. He must, at that rate, have been always well supplied with money.

E. No, you are mistaken; for he squandered it as fast as he got it, so that he never had any. Indeed, sometimes he cut a great dash, which is a disease peculiar to his nation; but then it never lasted long. His good fortune exasperated the students, who frequented the same nurseries of education, against him, and they got him into several scrapes, so that at the end of four months I lost him. He was, however, a mighty good lodger, and I regret the loss of him to this day.

F. Who came in his stead?

E. The most singular man, perhaps, that ever yet lived: a husband faithful and affectionate even beyond the grave, who could not be comforted for the loss of his dear rib—in short, a phenix of a husband. The moment he came, he ordered his room to be hung with black, shut up his windows against the rays of the sun, and had no light in his chamber but the dim glimmerings of a lamp. Enclosed in this frightful gloom, his constant employment was to sob and shed tears without ceasing. Very often, as if he had been possessed, he would speak aloud to an urn that stood upon a table covered with black cloth, and which he seemed to adore. He would converse with that precious relic, and speak to it as if it answered his passionate expostulations.

F. It is a chance but some spirit was enclosed in that same urn.

E. A spirit! What a simpleton you are! No, it was the heart of his wife; that was the object of his vows and adoration.

F. This was tenderness of grief to excess. I can scarce believe what you tell me.

E. Nor should I, if I had not seen it. I remember, some time or other, to have heard one of my lodgers reading a book which mentioned a story of the same sort of fidelity, or madness, in an English philosopher, which I do not believe to this day, notwithstanding what I have told you; for an example of this kind must stand alone.

F. But how long did your lodger continue in this fit?

E. Full three months. True it is, his eyes, the fountains of his tears, began to dry up, and refused to furnish him with fresh supplies of continued grief, and by degrees his devotions to the urn seemed to smack of form and ceremony. Happily for him, his friends found him out, and of consequence relieved him. I believe he yielded to the violence they made use of with only a seeming reluctance. However, away they took him, and I was freed of this mournful guest.

F. And, I suppose, did not much lament the loss of him.

E. Not in the least, I assure you. The room was afterward let to a woman, at which I rejoiced mightily, as I had hitherto been acquainted only with men. A kind of Quaker's dress and the stamp of forty years marked upon her face, gave her a matronly air, which struck me at first sight; and by what I had heard of pietists, I immediately judged her to be one.

F. Now, perhaps you were mistaken.

E. I was very soon convinced of my error, for the woman was a woman of sense and good conduct. She loved pleasure, yet regarded her reputation, and came from the country, a great way off, to Madrid, that she might be sheltered from the malice of slander; and, a very short time after, the gentleman on whose account she had undertaken the journey followed her. Bless me! how surprised I was at the first visit she received from her lover! She flew with transport into

his arms; her demureness was changed into a wanton sprightliness, and the glow upon her cheeks effaced the traces of her age.

F. A pretty lady for a pietist, truly!

E. As she loved her man with all the violence of passion, she made use of every method to preserve her conquest. She was very well aware that, at her age, it is permissible for women to embellish the charms of nature by art, and accordingly she used everything she could for that purpose!

F. And what arts, pray, did she use for that purpose?

E. I will tell you. Besides black and white, with which she painted her complexion to what height of color she pleased, she called in every other thing to her assistance—dress, baths, and perfumes. She was at her toilet always till her gallant came, and repaired to it again immediately when he was gone away. She was perpetually at her glass, practising the different airs, either sprightly or languishing, which she imagined might do execution. As for the artillery of endearments and caresses, that she was perfect mistress of.

F. With all that, methinks, it was hardly possible she could fail of making herself beloved.

E. But then she had other charms infinitely more powerful over the heart of a young lover. She was liberal and rich, and one must have a heart of flint not to love a generous mistress. But the appointed days of man are numbered. When these two lovers were at the height of mutual felicity, the gallant fell sick, and died a few days afterward, in spite of all the assistance that could be administered by the most able physicians.

F. The lady, no doubt, took on dreadfully?

E. Yes, she wept, resumed her former demure air, and

went back to her own part of the country, to edify her neighbors by her example. My room was not long empty. It was taken by another woman, who was, by profession, a go-between, a match-maker.

F. A rare kind of occupation, truly.

E. It is an occupation that is very common. Negotiators of this sort require a deal of address, and this good lady did not want for that. She carried the proposals, procured interviews, and very often brought the matter to a final conclusion. How many of these contracts have been ratified in my apartment! She would make a younger brother, not worth a shilling, pass for a gentleman of fortune, and set off a demi-rep for a pattern of illustrious virtue.

F. What an admirable woman!

E. All this she could do with the greatest ease, and could take in the most cautious and wary; so that by her dexterity she had got a pretty fortune. But at last she began to have scruples, and remorse carried her so far, that she retired into a convent, there to repent of her former scandalous life. Thus a fit of religion deprived me of this experienced brokeress.

F. Well, but happily for you, the natural indifference of your temper prevented your regretting the loss of her.

E. That is true. After her I had a great many people of common character in life; men and women, for example, who were concerned in lawsuits, a very troublesome sort of lodgers; or people who came from the country to see what o'clock it was in Madrid, and returned home, for the most part, as wise as they were before. But it begins to grow late; so, neighbor, I wish you a good-night. Another time when we meet I will give you an account of some other original characters whom I have had at my fireside.

F. Adieu, good neighbor. I will not fail to put you in mind of your promise.

Asmodeus Emerges from the Bottle

Don Cleofas looked around him, and much wondered he should meet with nobody in an apartment which seemed so very odd and surprising. He examined it with great attention, and saw a copper lamp hanging from the ceiling, books and papers in confusion on the table, spheres and compasses on the one side, vials and quadrants on the other; all of which made him conclude that under this roof lived an astrologer, who usually retired hither to make his observations. He reflected on the dangers he had by good fortune escaped, and was considering what course was the most proper for him to take, when he was interrupted by a deep sigh that broke forth very near him. He at first took it for a nocturnal illusion, or fantom, proceeding from his disturbed imagination, and without interruption continued his reflections.

But being interrupted a second time in the same manner, he then took it for something real; and, though he saw no soul in the room, could not help crying out, "Who the devil is it that sighs here?" "It is I, Sir Student," answered a voice which had something very extraordinary in it. "I have been six months enclosed in one of these glass vials. In this house lives a skilful astrologer and magician, who, by the power of his art, has confined me to this close prison." "You are a spirit then?" said Cleofas, somewhat confused at this uncommon adventure. "I am a demon," replied the

voice, "and you are come very opportunely to free me from a slavery where I languish in idleness; though I am the most active and indefatigable devil in hell."

Cleofas was somewhat affrighted at these words; but, being naturally courageous, he collected himself, and, in a resolute tone, thus addressed himself to the spirit, "Sir Demon, pray inform me by what character you are distinguished among your brethren. Are you a devil of quality, or an ordinary one?" "I am," replied the voice, "a very considerable devil, and am more esteemed in this and in the other world than any other." "Perhaps," replied Cleofas, "you may be the demon which we call Lucifer?" "No," replied the spirit; "he is the mountebank's devil." "Are you, then, Uriel?" returned the student. "Fie!" hastily interrupted the voice, "he is the patron of traders, tailors, butchers, bakers, and other third-rate thieves."

"It may be you are Beelzebub?" said the youth. "You are wrong," answered the spirit; "he is the demon of valets and butlers, or waiting-men." "This surprises me," said the student; "I took Beelzebub for one of the greatest of your number." "He is one of the least," replied the demon. "You have no true notion of our hell."

"You must, then," replied Don Cleofas, "be either Leviathan, Belphegor, or Ashtaroth?" "Oh! as for those three," said the voice, "they are devils of the first rank; they are the court-spirits; they enter into the councils of princes, animate their ministers, form leagues, stir up insurrections in states, and light the torches of war. These are not such boobies as the first you mentioned to me." "Ah! tell me, I entreat you," said the student, "what post has Flagel?" "He is the soul of the law and the life of the bar," replied the devil. "It is he who makes out the attorneys' and bai-

liffs' writs; he inspires the pleaders, possesses the council, and attends the judges.

"But my business lies another way: I make ridiculous matches, and marry old graybeards to raw girls under age, masters to their maids, girls of low fortune to lovers that have none. It is I that have introduced into the world luxury, debauchery, games of chance, and chemistry. I am the inventor of carousals, dancing, music, plays, and all the new French fashions. In a word, I am the celebrated Asmodeus, surnamed the *Devil on Crutches.*"

"Ah!" cried Don Cleofas, "are you the famous Asmodeus, so gloriously celebrated by Agrippa and the Clavicula Salamonis? Really, you have not told me all your amusements; you have forgotten the best of them. I know that you sometimes divert yourself with assuaging the pains of unfortunate lovers. By the same token, it was by your assistance that a young gentleman, a friend of mine, crept into the good graces of the lady of a doctor of the university of Alcala." "It is true," said the spirit; "I reserved that till the last. I am the demon of luxury, or, to express it more genteelly, the god Cupid. For the poets have bestowed that fine name on me, and, indeed, painted me in very advantageous colors. They describe me with gilded wings, a fillet bound over my eyes, a bow in my hand, a quiver of arrows on my shoulders, and a charming, beautiful face. What sort of face it is you shall immediately see, if you please to set me at liberty."

"Sir Asmodeus," replied Don Cleofas, "you know that I have long been your sincere devotee; of the truth of which the dangers I just now run are sufficient evidences. I should be very ambitious of an opportunity of serving you; but the vessel in which you are hidden is undoubtedly enchanted,

and all my endeavors to unstop or break it will be vain. Therefore I cannot very well tell which way to deliver you out of prison. I am not much used to these sort of deliverances; and, betwixt you and me, if such a subtle devil as you are cannot make your way out, how can a wretched mortal like me effect it?" "It is in your power to do it," answered the demon. "The vial in which I am enclosed is merely a plain glass bottle, which is very easy to break. You need only to throw it on the ground, and I shall immediately appear in human shape." "If so," said the student, "it is easier than I imagined. Tell me, then, in which vial you are, for I see so many like one another, that I cannot distinguish them." "It is the fourth from the window," replied the spirit. "Though the cork be sealed with a magical seal, yet the bottle will easily break."

"I understand, Sir Asmodeus," returned Don Cleofas. "There is now only one small difficulty which deters me. When I have done you this service, will you not make me pay for the broken pots?" "No accident shall befall you," answered the demon; "but, on the contrary, you will be pleased with my acquaintance. I will teach you whatever you are desirous to know, inform you of all things which happen in the world, and discover to you all the faults of mankind; I will be your tutelar demon. You shall find me much more intelligent than Socrates; and I will make you far surpass that philosopher in wisdom. In a word, I will bestow myself on you, with my good and ill qualities; the latter of which shall not be less advantageous to you than the former."

"These are fine promises," replied the student, "but you infernal gentlemen are accused of not being very religious observers of what you promise to men." "It is a groundless

charge," replied Asmodeus. "Some of my brethren, indeed, make no scruple of breaking their word; but I—not to mention the service you are going to do me, which I can never sufficiently repay—am a slave to mine; and I swear, by all that renders our oaths inviolable, that I will not deceive you. Depend upon my assurances. I promise you, withal, that you shall revenge yourself on Doña Thomasa, that perfidious lady who hid four ruffians to surprise and force you to marry her—a circumstance that should please you."

The young student, charmed above all with this last promise, to hasten its accomplishment immediately took the vial, and, without concerning himself what might be the event of it, threw it hard against the ground. It broke into a thousand pieces, and overflowed the floor with a blackish liquor, which by little and little evaporated, and converted itself into a thick smoke; which, dissipating all at once, the amazed student beheld the figure of a man in a cloak, about two feet and a half high, resting on two crutches. This diminutive lame monster had goat's legs, a long visage, sharp chin, a yellow and black complexion, and a very flat nose; his eyes, which seemed very little, resembled two lighted coals; his mouth was extremely wide, above which were two wretched red whiskers, edged with a pair of unparalleled lips.

This charming Cupid's head was wrapped up in a sort of turban of red crape, set off with a plume of cocks' and peacocks' feathers. About his neck he wore a yellow linen collar, on which were drawn several models of necklaces and earrings. He was dressed in a short white satin coat, and girt about with a girdle of virgin-parchment, marked with talismanical characters. On this coat were painted several pairs of women's stays, very advantageously fitted for the

discovery of their breasts, scarfs, party-colored aprons, new-fashioned head-dresses of various sorts, each more extravagant than the other.

But all these were nothing compared with his cloak, the ground of which was also of white satin. On it, with Indian ink, were drawn an infinite number of figures, with so much freedom, and such masterly strokes, that it was natural enough to think the devil had a hand in it. On one side appeared a Spanish lady, covered with her veil, teasing a stranger as they were walking; and on the other a French one, practising new airs in her glass, in order to try them at a young patched and painted abbot, who appeared at her chamber door. Here a number of Italian cavaliers were singing and playing on the guitar under their mistresses' balconies; and there a company of Germans, all in confusion and unbuttoned, more intoxicated with wine and begrimed with snuff than any conceited French fops, surrounding a table overflowed with the disgusting remains of their debauch. In one place was a great Mohammedan lord coming out of the bath, surrounded by all the women of his seraglio, officiously crowding to tender him their service; in another, an English gentleman very gallantly presenting a pipe and a pot of beer to his mistress.

There gamesters were also wonderfully well represented; some of them animated by a sprightly joy, heaping up pieces of gold and silver in their hats; and others, broken and reduced to play upon honor, casting up their sacrilegious eyes to heaven, and gnawing their cards with despair. To conclude, there were as many curious things to be seen on it as on the admirable buckler of the son of Peleus, which exhausted all Vulcan's art; with this difference betwixt the performance of the two cripples: that the figures on the buck-

ler had no relation to the exploits of Achilles, but, on the contrary, those on the cloak were so many lively images of whatever was done in the world by the suggestion of Asmodeus.—"*The Devil on Crutches.*"

J. F. Regnard

The Cowardly Marquis

The MARQUIS, VALÈRE, HECTOR, *and Three* LACKEYS.

Hec. Ah, here is the marquis, that tender hero.

Val. He who sighs?

Hec. Yes, after our countess.

Mar. (*behind the scenes*). Let my chair wait two hundred paces from here. And you three keep at a distance too. I am incognito. (*Exeunt* LACKEYS.)

Hec. (*to* VALÈRE). What will he try to do?

Mar. Are you not the gentleman named Valère?

Val. Yes, sir, that has always been my name.

Mar. I am most profoundly charmed. Will you permit the valet to withdraw?

Val. (*to* HECTOR). Go.

Hec. Sir——

Val. Go. Must I repeat it? (*Exit* HECTOR.)

Mar. Do you know who I am?

Val. I have not that honor.

Mar. (*aside*). Courage, Marquis! You are strong. He is afraid. (*Aloud.*) I am nevertheless well known in the city, and am familiar, you must know, with dukes, archdukes, princes, marquises, and great lords—everybody, in a word, most fashionable at court. There I am dangerous to every beauty, master of every feast, singer and soul of every assembly. I am perfect in everything. My courage is

known. I never fight without killing my opponent. I have come out of a hundred quarrels. My ancestors are famous. You have before you a gentleman.

Val. Your appearance bears witness to that.

Mar. It seems now that I almost unawares have touched with the flame of my love a certain lady. The affair is commonplace enough, but the beauty has become enamored of me, as you can readily believe. Only, some one claims to have a right to her, and to try to oppose obstacles to my love is like trying to stem a mountain torrent.

Val. I hardly believe that any one would be so bold.

Mar. I am told, nevertheless, that you yourself are doing it.

Val. I?

Mar. That without respect for either my station or quality, you nourish in your heart a wish to defeat mine.

Val. That is an absolute untruth. I know well enough that fate has put a distance between us.

Mar. (*aside*). He trembles. (*Aloud.*) Do you know that I have something here to make you feel very small?

Val. So I perceive.

Mar. You think that with your caustic humor you can treat me as if I were the ace of spades.

Val. I, sir?

Mar. (*aside*). He is afraid of me. (*Aloud.*) You are plunging into it, you twopenny upstart!

(VALÈRE *knocks off the* MARQUIS'S *hat.*)

Mar. (*aside*). He has courage after all. (*Aloud.*) I restrain my anger. But——

Val. (*putting his hand to his sword*). Since you wish it, I will give you satisfaction.

Mar. Good! Good! That makes me laugh!

Val. Your laughter is not to my taste, and your insolent airs disgust me. You are a puppy.

Mar. I know you do not mean that.

Val. A fool, a booby!

Mar. Sir, you are only jesting.

Val. (*drawing his sword*). Let us find out immediately whether these great gentlemen are so terrible in their anger as you say.

Mar. But must we quarrel over an absurd point of form?

Val. The wine has been drawn, sir; now it must be drunk!

Mar. (*shouting*). Oh! Oh! I am wounded! I am dead! Oh!—"*The Gambler.*"

Jean de la Bruyère

Menippus

MENIPPUS is the crow that is made fine with other birds' feathers. He neither speaks nor thinks himself, but repeats other peoples' thoughts and discourse. It is so natural for him to make use of their wit, that he himself is the first to be deceived by it; for, imagining that he expresses his own judgment or conception, he but echoes the man he last parted with. For a quarter of an hour he is tolerable, but then, his shallow memory flagging, be becomes insipid. He alone is ignorant of his distance from the sublime and heroic that he affects. He is quite unfit to judge of another's wit, innocently believing himself to have as much as possible, and thus assumes the air and deportment of one who neither needs more for himself, nor envies it in others. Without concealment he often soliloquizes to himself, and thus you may meet him chattering and arguing to himself as if some great matter were under deliberation. If you salute him at such a time he is strangely perplexed, not knowing whether to answer your salutation or not, and before he comes to a resolution you are out of sight. It is his vanity that has elevated him and made him what he is. To observe him you would conclude that his whole business was to consider his own person, dress, and deportment; that he fancied the eyes of all men open only to behold him, and that as he passed along they but relieved each other in admiring him.

—*"The Characters."*

Nicander

NICANDER entertains Elise on the sweet and charming manner in which he lived with his wife, from the day of their marriage to the hour of her death. He has said before that he is sorry they had no children; he now repeats the remark. At times he talks of his houses in town, at times of his lands in the country, calculates the revenue they bring him, describes the plan of his buildings and the situation of his seat, enlarges on the convenience of the apartments, the richness and neatness of their furnishings; he assures her that he loves good cheer and fine entertainments, and complains that his late wife was too much averse to society. "You are so rich," says one of his friends brought there for the purpose, "why do you not buy such an office, or make such an addition to your estate?" "Indeed," replies Nicander, "you believe me richer than I am!" He forgets neither his extraction nor his connections. "The lord treasurer, who is my cousin; the chancellor's wife, who is my near kinswoman;" this is his style. He tells her how he once became discontented with his nearest relations, and offended with his heirs. "Am I not wronged? Have I any great reason to do well for them?" he asks Elise, and desires her to be judge. He then intimates that he is in a feeble and languishing state of health, and speaks of the vault where he designs to be interred. He fawns, flatters, and is very officious to all those who have any interest in the lady he courts. But Elise has not the courage to grow rich at the price of being his wife. While he is yet talking to her, in comes a gentleman whose presence alone dismounts the batteries that Ni-

cander has raised. He gets up melancholy and embarrassed, and is now saying elsewhere what he said to Elise.

—"*The Characters.*"

Iphis

IPHIS at church sees a new-fashioned shoe; he looks upon his own and blushes, and can no longer believe himself dressed. He came to prayers only to show himself, and now he hides himself. The foot keeps him in his room the rest of the day. He has a soft hand, with which he gives you a gentle pat. He is sure to laugh often to show his white teeth. He strains his mouth to a perpetual smile. He looks upon his legs, he views himself in the glass, and nobody can have so good an opinion of another as he has of himself. He has acquired a delicate and clear voice, and has a happy manner in talking. He has a turn of the head, a sweetness in his glance that he never fails to make use of. His gait is slow, and the prettiest he is able to contrive. He sometimes employs a little rouge, but seldom; he will not make a habit of it. It is true that he wears breeches and a hat, has neither earrings nor necklace, therefore I have not put him in the chapter on woman.—"*The Characters.*"

Thoughts

THE pleasure of criticizing robs us of the pleasure of unconscious delight.

The most accomplished work of the age would fail under the hands of censors and critics, if the author would listen

to all their objections, and allow each one to throw out the passage that had pleased him least.

This good we get from the perfidiousness of woman, that it cures us of jealousy.

There are but two ways of rising in the world—by your own industry, or by the weakness of others.

If life is miserable, it is painful to live; if happy, it is terrible to die; both come to the same thing.

There is nothing men are so anxious to preserve, or so careless about, as life.

We are afraid of old age, and afraid not to attain it.

If some men died, and others did not, death would indeed be a terrible affliction.

There are but three events that happen to men—birth, life, and death. They know nothing of their birth, suffer when they die, and forget to live.

Alexis Piron

Three Epitaphs on Himself

I

Here my journey's end I find,
  Rugged, hard, and void of rule;
Clear I saw, and yet was blind,
  I was wise and yet a fool.
Slowly to the hole I've got
  Which nor fool nor sage can fly,
To travel—whither I know not.
  So good luck, Piron, and good-by!

II

Wayfaring friend, who fain wouldst know from me
What erst I was. I nothing chose to be;
My life a blank. Sure, I was well discerning;
  For he shows monstrous folly after all,
Who, sprung from naught, and soon to naught returning,
  Longs to be something in the interval.

III

His unregarded grave here Piron has,
Who naught, not e'en Academician, was.

Lines on the French Academy

THE fact is, in France they've an excellent plan
  The authors who pen pond'rous writings to cure.
An "Academy" welcomes the tedious man,
  And there he does nothing but doze fast and sure:
For to genius the sleep of that place is as dead
As to love is the sleep of the conjugal bed.

Pierre de Marivaux

Paying One's Debts

The FISCAL *and* BLAISE.

Fisc. Good-day, Master Blaise.

Blaise. Your servant, good Fiscal; but call me Mister Blaise. That's my right.

Fisc. Aha! I understand. Your fortune has raised your quality. So be it, Master Blaise. I rejoice at your good fortune, of which your children have just informed me. I congratulate you, and at the same time beg you to return to me the fifty francs which you have owed me for a month.

Blaise. That's true. I recognize that debt, but I cannot pay it. That would be a source of reproach to me.

Fisc. How? You cannot pay it? Why?

Blaise. Because that would not be worthy of a person of my means. That would turn everything to confusion.

Fisc. You call it confusion! Did not I lend you my money?

Blaise. Assuredly. I have nothing to say against that. You gave it to me; I received it; I owe it to you; I have given you my note for it, which you have only to keep carefully. Come from time to time to demand your due. I won't prevent you. I'll put you off. At the worst you come again. I'll put you off again, and thus, from date to date, our time will pass by properly. That's the way these things are done.

Fisc. Surely you are making fun of me!

Blaise. By no means. Put yourself in my place. Do

you wish me to lose my reputation for the sake of fifty miserable francs? Are they worth the disadvantage of being looked on as a great fellow for paying? One must be reasonable. If it can be done without prejudice to my affairs, I'll give you the money with the greatest pleasure. I have it; here it is. I can let you have it as a loan—that's good practise; but in payment—that would never do.

Fisc. (*to himself*). I see how it's to be done. (*Aloud.*) You say that you may lend money, then?

Blaise. Assuredly!

Fisc. It is in itself a noble privilege, and, what is more, suits you better than any other, for I have noticed that you are generous by nature.

Blaise (*laughing and bridling up*). Yes, true, that's not bad. You put it well. You must get on the right side of us great folks. I have, in fact, great virtues, and very comfortable virtues, since they cost me nothing. And, at the worst, I need not show them. There you have the whole business.

Fisc. I foresee that you will have many virtues of the latter kind.

Blaise (*giving him a little pat on the shoulder*). That's true, Mister Fiscal, that's true. By Heaven! but you please me!

Fisc. That's a great honor for me.

Blaise. I don't say no.

Fisc. We'll talk no more about what you owe me.

Blaise. Oh, but you must talk of it. I want you to. It'll be amusing.

Fisc. As you wish. I, for my part, will thus satisfy the dignity of your new condition, and you shall pay me when you please.

Blaise. Good; in a few dozens of years.

Fisc. In a hundred, if you choose. We'll leave that. But you have a noble heart, and I have a favor to ask of you, namely, that you will be so kind as to lend me fifty francs.

Blaise. Here they are, Fiscal, take them. I am only too pleased to serve you.

Fisc. I am an honest man. Now I tear up your note, and I am paid.

Blaise. You are paid? Oh, but that's rascally of you! By Heaven! this is no way in which to trick people of my condition out of their honor! This is an affront!

Fisc. What an odd fellow you are. This virtue of yours is costing you nothing!—"*The Village Heir.*"

François Arouet—"Voltaire"

The Philosophy of Dr. Pangloss

ONCE upon a time there lived in the castle of the noble Baron of Thundertentronckh, in Westphalia, a young lad to whom Nature had given the most pleasing manners. His countenance expressed his soul. He had a pretty correct judgment, together with the utmost simplicity of mind; and it was for that reason, I suppose, that he bore the name of Candide. The old servants of the house suspected that he was the son of the noble baron's sister and of a worthy gentleman in the neighborhood, whom the young lady would never marry, because he could show no more than three score and eleven quarterings, the rest of his family tree having perished through the ravages of time.

The baron was one of the most powerful nobles of Westphalia, for his castle had a gate as well as windows, and his great hall was even adorned with tapestry. All the dogs in his stable-yard formed at need a pack of hounds, and his grooms acted as whippers-in; the vicar of the village was his grand almoner. Everybody called him "my Lord," and laughed at all his good stories.

My lady the baroness, who weighed about three hundred and fifty pounds, and thereby commanded the greatest consideration, did the honors of the house with a dignity which raised its reputation still higher. Her daughter Cunégonde, aged seventeen, was of a fresh and ruddy complexion, plump and appetizing. The baron's son appeared in all respects worthy of his sire. The tutor Pangloss was the oracle

of the house, and little Candide listened to his lessons with all the ready faith natural to his age and disposition.

Pangloss used to teach the science of metaphysico-theologo-cosmologo-noodleology. He demonstrated most admirably that there is no effect without a cause, and that, in this best of all possible worlds, the castle of my lord baron was the most magnificent of castles, and my lady the best of all possible baronesses.

"It has been proved," said he, "that things cannot be otherwise than they are; for, everything being made for a certain end, the end for which everything is made is necessarily the best end. Observe how noses were made to carry spectacles, and spectacles we have accordingly. Our legs are clearly intended for shoes and stockings, so we have them. Stone has been formed to be hewn and dressed for building castles, so my lord has a very fine one, for it is meet that the greatest baron in the province should have the best accommodation. Pigs were made to be eaten, and we eat pork all the year round. Consequently those who have asserted that all is well have said what is silly; they should have said of everything that is, that it is the best that could possibly be."

Candide listened attentively, and innocently believed all that he heard; for he thought Mlle. Cunégonde extremely beautiful, though he never had the boldness to tell her so. He felt convinced that, next to the happiness of being born Baron of Thundertentronckh, the second degree of happiness was to be Mlle. Cunégonde, the third to see her every day, and the fourth to hear Professor Pangloss, the greatest philosopher in the province, and therefore in all the world.

One day Mlle. Cunégonde, while taking a walk near the castle, in the little wood which was called the park, saw

through the bushes Dr. Pangloss giving a lesson in experimental physics to her mother's chambermaid, a little brunette, very pretty and very willing to learn. As Mlle. Cunégonde had a great taste for science, she watched with breathless interest the repeated experiments that were carried on under her eyes; she clearly perceived that the doctor had sufficient reason for all he did; she saw the connection between causes and effects, and returned home much agitated, though very thoughtful, and filled with a yearning after scientific pursuits, for sharing in which she wished that young Candide might find sufficient reason in her, and that she might find the same in him.

She met Candide as she was on her way back to the castle, and blushed; the youth blushed likewise. She bade him good morning in a voice that struggled for utterance; and Candide answered her without well knowing what he was saying. Next day, as the company were leaving the table after dinner, Cunégonde and Candide found themselves behind a screen. Cunégonde let fall her handkerchief; Candide picked it up; she innocently took hold of his hand, and the young man, as innocently, kissed hers with an ardor, a tenderness, and a grace quite peculiar; their lips met and their eyes sparkled. His lordship, the Baron of Thunder-tentronckh, happened to pass by the screen, and, seeing that particular instance of cause and effect, drove Candide out of the castle with vigorous kicks. Cunégonde swooned away, but, as soon as she recovered, my lady the baroness boxed her ears, and all was confusion and consternation in that most magnificent and most charming of all possible castles.

—*"Candide."*

François Arouet

The Martial Bulgarians

CANDIDE, driven out of his terrestrial paradise, walked on for a long time without knowing whither, weeping, lifting up his eyes to heaven, and often turning them toward that most magnificent of castles, which contained the most beautiful of all barons' daughters. He laid himself down supperless in the midst of the fields, between two ridges, and the snow began to fall upon him in thick flakes. Next morning, Candide, benumbed with cold, dragged himself to the nearest town, which bore the name of Waldberghofdikdorf, without a farthing in his pocket, and dying of hunger and fatigue. He stopped in melancholy mood at a tavern door. Two men dressed in blue noticed him.

"Comrade," said one of them, "there is a fine young fellow, and just of the right size."

They stepped forward, and very politely invited Candide to dine with them.

"Gentlemen," says he, with engaging modesty, "you do me much honor, but I have no money to pay my reckoning."

"Oh! sir," says one of the men in blue, "persons of your figure and merit never pay anything; are you not five feet five inches tall?"

"Yes, gentlemen, that is my height," says he, with his best bow.

"Come, sir, pray take a seat; we will not only pay your score, but we will never allow such a man as you to want money. What are men made for but to help one another?"

"You are right," says Candide; "that is what Dr. Pangloss always told me, and I see clearly that all is for the best."

They beg him to accept a few crowns; he takes them, and is about to tender his note of hand for the amount, but they will not hear of it; and so they sit down to table.

"Are you not warmly attached——"

"Oh, yes," exclaims Candide, "I am warmly attached to Mlle. Cunégonde."

"Excuse me," says one of the gentlemen, "but what we want to know is whether you are not warmly attached to the King of the Bulgarians?"

"Not in the least," says he, "for I have never seen him."

"You don't say so! He is the most charming of monarchs, and we must drink his health."

"With the greatest pleasure, gentlemen." And he drinks accordingly.

"Enough," say they; "now you are the prop, the pillar, the defender, and the hero of the Bulgarians; your fortune is made, and your glory assured."

They forthwith clap fetters on his feet, and conduct him to the headquarters of their regiment. There he is made to wheel to the right, and wheel to the left, to draw his ramrod, and to return it, to present, to fire, and to march at the double; and he gets thirty strokes with a stick for his pains. On the following day he goes through his exercises not quite so badly, and receives only twenty strokes; while on the next after that he escapes with ten, and is regarded as a prodigy by his comrades.

Candide, astonished to find himself a hero, could not very well make out how it came to pass. One fine spring day he took it into his head to go out for a walk, and followed his nose straight on, supposing that it was the privilege of the human species as well as of the brute creation to make use of their legs at their own will and pleasure. He had not pro-

ceeded two leagues, when, lo and behold, four other heroes, each of them six feet high, caught him up, bound him, and led him off to prison. He was brought before a court-martial, and asked whether he would prefer to be flogged thirty-six times by the whole regiment, or to receive at once a dozen bullets in his brain. It was of no use for him to protest that the will is free, and that he wished neither the one nor the other; he found himself obliged to make a choice, and he determined, in virtue of the divine gift called *freedom*, to run the gantlet thirty-six times. He tried it twice, and, the regiment consisting of two thousand men, this meant four thousand blows for him, which almost laid bare his muscles and nerves from the nape of the neck to the end of the spine. As they were going to give him a third course, Candide, unable to bear any more, entreated them to have the kindness to knock him on the head and finish him. This favor was granted, his eyes were bandaged, and he was made to kneel down. The King of the Bulgarians, happening to pass by that moment, made inquiry into the culprit's offense; and, as he was a man of discernment, and gathered, from all that Candide told him, that he was a young metaphysician and quite ignorant of the ways of the world, the king graciously vouchsafed him his pardon with a clemency that will be praised by all the papers and appreciated by posterity. A clever surgeon cured Candide's back in three weeks with the ointments prescribed by Dioscorides; and he had already a little fresh skin and was fit to march, when the King of the Bulgarians gave battle to the King of the Avarians.

Never was seen a spectacle so fine, so smart, so splendid, as the two armies. Trumpets, fifes, hautboys, drums, and cannon made such harmony as never had a match in hell

itself. Cannon-balls swept off in the first instance nearly six thousand men on each side; then musket-bullets removed from this best of all possible worlds about nine or ten thousand worthless fellows that tainted its surface. Bayonets were also sufficient reasons for the death of some thousands of men. The total may have amounted to thirty thousand souls. Candide, who trembled as any other philosopher would have done, hid himself as well as he could during this heroic butchery. At last, while both kings were causing a *Te Deum* to be sung, each in his own camp, he made up his mind to go and reason upon causes and effects somewhere else. He passed over heaps of the dead and dying, and reached first of all a neighboring village; he found it laid in ashes. It was an Avarian village, which the Bulgarians had burned in accordance with the laws of nations. Here old men, covered with wounds, looked helplessly on while their wives were dying with their throats cut, and still holding their infants to their blood-stained breasts; there young girls, ripped open after having satisfied the natural wants of several heroes, were breathing forth their last sighs; while others again, half-roasted, cried out for some one to put them out of their agony. Brains were scattered over the ground, and legs and arms, cut off, lay beside them.—"*Candide.*"

How to Encourage Admirals

"Ah! Pangloss, Pangloss! Ah! Martin, Martin! Ah! my dear Cunégonde! What kind of world is this?" said Candide, when he was safely on board the Dutch vessel.

"A very mad one, and altogether abominable," answered Martin.

"You are acquainted with England. Are the people there as mad as in France?"

"Theirs is another sort of madness," said Martin. "You know the two nations are at war about a few acres of snow in the region of Canada, and that they are spending on that war more than all Canada is worth. To tell you precisely whether there are more people who ought to be shut up as lunatics in one country than in another is beyond my feeble capacity; I only know that, as a general rule, the people whom we are about to visit are exceedingly morose."

While conversing thus, they came in sight of Portsmouth; a multitude of people lined the shore, and had their gaze fixed attentively on a stout man, who was kneeling, with eyes blindfolded, on the deck of one of the men-of-war; four soldiers, stationed opposite this man, discharged three bullets each into his skull, in the calmest manner possible; and then all the crowd returned home, very well satisfied with what they had seen.

"What now is the meaning of all this?" said Candide, "and what demon holds sway everywhere?"

In answer to his inquiry, who that stout man was who had just been put to death with so much ceremony, he was told that he was an admiral.

"And why do they kill an admiral?"

"Because," said his informants, "he has not caused enough people to be slaughtered; he gave battle to a French admiral, and it has been found that he did not come to sufficiently close quarters."

"But," said Candide, "the French admiral must have been as far from the English admiral as he from the other!"

"That cannot be disputed," was the reply; "but in this

country it is thought a good thing to kill an admiral from time to time in order to encourage the rest."—"*Candide.*"

The Church of England

ENGLAND is properly the country of sectarists. "In my Father's house are many mansions." An Englishman, as one to whom liberty is natural, may go to heaven his own way.

Nevertheless, though every one is permitted to serve God in whatever mode or fashion he thinks proper, yet their true religion, that in which a man makes his fortune, is the sect of Episcopalians or Churchmen, called the Church of England, or simply the Church, by way of eminence. No person can hold an employment either in England or Ireland unless he be ranked among the faithful—that is, professes himself a member of the Church of England. This reason (which carries mathematical evidence with it) has converted such numbers of Dissenters of all persuasions, that not a twentieth part of the nation is out of the pale of the Established Church. The English clergy have retained a great number of the Romish ceremonies, and especially that of receiving, with a most scrupulous attention, their tithes. They also have the pious ambition to aim at superiority.

Moreover, they very religiously inspire their flock with a holy zeal against Dissenters of all denominations. This zeal was pretty violent under the Tories in the four last years of Queen Anne; but was productive of no greater mischief than the breaking the windows of some meeting-houses and the demolishing of a few of them. For religious rage

ceased in England with the civil wars, and was no more under Queen Anne than the hollow noise of a sea whose billows still heaved, though so long after the storm when the Whigs and Tories laid waste their native country in the same manner as the Guelfs and Ghibellines formerly did theirs. It was absolutely necessary for both parties to call in religion on this occasion. The Tories declared for Episcopacy, and the Whigs, as some imagined, were for abolishing it. However, after these had got the upper hand, they contented themselves with only abridging it.

At the time when the Earl of Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke used to drink healths to the Tories, the Church of England considered those noblemen as the defenders of its holy privileges. The lower House of Convocation (a kind of House of Commons), composed wholly of the clergy, was in some credit at that time. At least the members of it had the liberty to meet, to dispute on ecclesiastical matters, to sentence impious books from time to time to the flames—that is, books written against themselves. The ministry, which is now composed of Whigs, does not so much as allow those gentlemen to assemble, so that they are at this time reduced (in the obscurity of their respective parishes) to the melancholy occupation of praying for the prosperity of the government whose tranquillity they would willingly disturb. With regard to the bishops, who are twenty-six in all, they still have seats in the House of Lords in spite of the Whigs, because the ancient abuse of considering them as barons subsists to this day. There is a clause, however, in the oath which the government requires from these gentlemen, that puts their Christian patience to a very great trial, *viz.*, that they shall be of the Church of England as by law established. There are few bishops, deans, or other

dignitaries, but imagine they are so by divine right. It is consequently a great mortification to them to be obliged to confess that they owe their dignity to a pitiful law enacted by a set of profane laymen.

A learned monk, Father Courayer, wrote a book lately to prove the validity and succession of English ordinations. This book was forbidden in France, but do you believe that the English ministry were pleased with it? Far from it. Those wicked Whigs don't care a straw whether the episcopal succession among them hath been interrupted or not, or whether Bishop Parker was consecrated (as it is pretended) in a tavern or a church. For these Whigs are much better pleased that the bishops should derive their authority from the Parliament than from the Apostles. Lord Bolingbroke observed that this notion of divine right would only make so many tyrants in lawn sleeves, but that the laws made so many citizens.

With regard to the morals of the English clergy, they are more regular than those of France, and for this reason. All the clergy—a very few excepted—are educated in the universities of Oxford or Cambridge, far from the depravity and corruption which reign in the capital. They are not called to dignities till very late, at a time of life when men are sensible of no other passion but avarice—that is, when their ambition craves a supply. Employments are here bestowed, both in the Church and the army, as a reward for long services; and we never see youngsters made bishops or colonels immediately upon their laying aside the academical gown; and besides, most of the clergy are married. The stiff and awkward air contracted by them at the university, and the little familiarity the men of this country have with the ladies, commonly oblige a bishop to confine himself to,

and rest contented with, his own. Clergymen sometimes take a glass at the tavern, custom giving them sanction on these occasions; if they fuddle themselves, they do it very thoroughly, and without causing the least scandal.

That fable-mixed kind of mortal (not to be defined), who is neither of the clergy nor of the laity, in a word, the thing called *abbé* in France, is a species quite unknown in England. All the clergy here are very much upon the reserve, and most of them pedants. When these are told that in France young fellows famous for their dissoluteness, and raised to the highest dignities of the Church by female intrigues, address the fair publicly in an amorous way, amuse themselves in writing tender love-songs, entertain their friends very splendidly every night at their own houses, and after the banquet is ended withdraw to invoke the assistance of the Holy Ghost, and call themselves boldly the successors of the Apostles—they bless God for their being Protestants. But these are shameless heretics, who deserve to be blown hence through the flames to Old Nick, as Rabelais says, and for this reason I do not trouble myself about them.

—*"Letters on England."*

The Presbyterians

As the priests of this sect receive but very inconsiderable stipends from their churches, and consequently cannot emulate the splendid luxury of bishops, they exclaim very naturally against honors which they can never attain to. Imagine the haughty Diogenes trampling underfoot the pride of Plato. The Scotch Presbyterians are not very un-

like that proud though tattered reasoner. Diogenes did not use Alexander half so impertinently as these treated King Charles II. For when they took up arms in his cause in opposition to Cromwell, who had deceived them, they forced that poor monarch to undergo the hearing of three or four sermons every day, would not allow him to play cards, and reduced him to a state of penitence and mortification, so that Charles soon grew sick of these pedants, and accordingly escaped from them with as much gladness as a boy does from school.

A Church of England minister appears as another Cato in presence of a juvenile, sprightly French graduate, who bawls for a whole morning together in the divinity schools, and hums a song in chorus with ladies in the evening; but this Cato is a very spark beside a Scotch Presbyterian. The latter affects a serious gait, puts on a sour look, wears a huge broad-brimmed hat and a long cloak over a very short coat, preaches through the nose, and gives the name of the Whore of Babylon to all churches where the ministers are so fortunate as to enjoy an annual revenue of five or six thousand pounds, and where the people are weak enough to allow this, and to give them the titles of my lord, your lordship, or your eminence.

These gentlemen, who have also some churches in England, introduced there the mode of grave and severe exhortations. To them is owing the sanctification of Sunday in the three kingdoms. People are there forbidden to work or take any recreation on that day, in which the severity is twice as great as that of the Romish Church. No operas, plays, or concerts are allowed in London on Sundays, and even cards are so expressly forbidden that none but persons of quality, and those we call the genteel, play on that day.

The rest of the nation go either to church, to the tavern, or to see their mistresses.—"*Letters on England.*"

Memnon, or Human Wisdom

MEMNON one day conceived the irrational design of being perfectly wise and prudent. There are very few persons who have not at some time or other had foolish thoughts of this kind pass through their heads. Memnon said to himself, "In order to be very wise, and consequently very happy, one has only to be without passions; and nothing is easier than that, as everybody knows. In the first place, I will never fall in love with a woman, for I will say to myself, whenever I see a sample of perfect beauty, 'Those cheeks will one day be wrinkled, those fine eyes will be rimmed with red, that swelling bosom will be flat and flabby, that lovely head will become bald.' I have only to see her now with the same eyes as those with which I shall see her then, and assuredly my head will not be turned by the sight of hers.

"In the second place, I will be always sober and temperate; good cheer, delicious wines, and the seductive charms of social intercourse will tempt me in vain. I shall have nothing to do but to bring before my mind the results of excess in a heavy head, a disordered stomach, the loss of reason, of health, and of time; and then I shall eat only for necessity, my health will be always well balanced, my thoughts always bright and clear. All this is so easy that there is no merit in such attainments.

"In the next place," said Memnon, "I must give a little

consideration to my property; my desires are moderate, my wealth is well bestowed with the receiver-general of the revenues of Nineveh, I have enough to support myself in independence, and that is the greatest of blessings. I shall never be under the cruel necessity of cringing and flattering; I shall envy nobody, and nobody will envy me. All that is still very easy. I have friends," continued he, "and I shall keep them, for they will have nothing to quarrel about with me. I will never be out of temper with them, nor they with me; that is a matter that presents no difficulty."

Having thus laid down his little scheme of wisdom and prudence in his room, Memnon put his head out of the window, and saw two women walking up and down under some plane-trees near his house. One of them was old, and appeared to have nothing on her mind; the other was young and pretty, and seemed to be lost in thought. She sighed, she wept, and her sighs and tears only added to her charms. Our sage was touched, not, of course, by the lady's beauty (he was quite confident of being above such weakness as that), but by the distress in which he saw her. He went down and accosted the fair Ninevite, with the intention of ministering wise consolation. That charming young person related to him, with the most simple and affecting air, all the injury done her by an uncle, who did not exist; she told him by what tricks he had deprived her of a fortune, which she had never possessed, and all that she had to fear from his violence.

"You seem to me," said she, "a man of such excellent judgment and good sense, that if you would only condescend to come to my house and inquire into my affairs, I feel sure that you could extricate me from the cruel embarrassment in which I find myself."

Memnon had no hesitation in following her, in order to make a judicious examination of her affairs, and to give her good advice.

The afflicted lady led him into a sweetly scented chamber, and politely made him sit down with her on a large ottoman. When the lady spoke she lowered her eyes, from which tears sometimes escaped, and, when she raised them, they always met the gaze of the sage Memnon. Her language was full of a tenderness which grew more tender each time that they exchanged glances. Memnon took her affairs zealously to heart, and every moment felt an increasing desire to oblige a maiden so modest and so unfortunate. By imperceptible degrees their conversation grew warmer. Memnon pressed her so closely with good advice, and bestowed such tender admonitions, that neither of them could any longer talk about business, and scarcely knew what they were doing.

Then the uncle, as might have been expected, arrived upon the scene. He was armed from head to foot; and the first thing he said was that he was going to kill, as was only just and proper, both his niece and the sage Memnon; the last remark that escaped him was that he might possibly pardon them for a large sum of money. Memnon was obliged to give him all that he had about him. In those times, fortunately, it was possible to get off as cheaply as that. America had not yet been discovered, and distressed damsels were not nearly so dangerous as they are nowadays.

Memnon returned home disconsolate and ashamed, and found a note there inviting him to dine with some of his most intimate friends.

"If I stay at home alone," said he, "I shall have my thoughts taken up with my unfortunate adventure; I shall

unable to eat anything, and shall certainly fall ill; it will much better to take a frugal meal with my intimate friends. the pleasure of their company I shall forget the piece of lly that I have committed this morning."

He goes to meet his friends, who find him a little out of spirits, and persuade him to drink away his melancholy. A little wine taken in moderation is a medicine for mind and body. So thinks the sage Memnon, and proceeds to get tipsy. Play is proposed after dinner. A modest game with one's friends is a blameless pastime. He plays, loses all that he has in his purse, and four times as much on his promise to pay. A dispute arises over the game, and the quarrel grows hot; one of his intimate friends throws a dice-box at his head, and puts out an eye. The sage Memnon is carried home drunk, without any money, and with one eye less than when he went.

After he had slept himself sober, and his brain was grown a little clearer, he sent his servant for some of the money which he had lodged with the receiver-general of the revenues of Nineveh, in order to pay what he owed to his intimate friends. He was told that his debtor had that very morning been declared a fraudulent bankrupt, an announcement which had thrown a hundred families into ruin. Memnon, in a state bordering on distraction, went to court with a plaster over his eye and a petition in his hand to solicit justice of the king against the bankrupt. In an ante-chamber he met a number of ladies, all wearing with apparent ease hoops twenty-four feet in circumference. One of these ladies, who knew him slightly, exclaimed with a sidelong glance, "Oh, what a horror!" Another, who was on more familiar terms with him, addressed him thus:

"Good evening, Mr. Memnon. It is indeed a pleasure to

see you, Mr. Memnon. By the way, Mr. Memnon, how is it you have lost an eye?" And she passed on without pausing for an answer. Memnon hid himself in a corner, and awaited the moment when he might cast himself at the monarch's feet. That moment came; he kissed the ground thrice, and presented his petition. His gracious Majesty received him very favorably, and gave the document to one of his satraps to report upon it. The satrap drew Memnon aside, and said:

"What a comical kind of one-eyed fool you are, to address yourself to the king rather than to me! And still more ridiculous to dare to demand justice against a respectable bankrupt, whom I honor with my protection, and who is the nephew of my mistress's waiting-maid. Let this matter drop, my friend, if you wish to keep the eye you still have left."

Thus Memnon, after having in the morning renounced the blandishments of women, intemperance at table, gambling, and quarreling, and besides all else the court, had ere nightfall been cajoled and robbed by a fair deceiver, had drunk to excess, played high, been concerned in a quarrel, had an eye put out, and been to court, where he had been treated with contempt and derision.

Petrified with astonishment, and crushed with vexation, he turned his steps homeward, sick at heart. Intending to enter his house, he found bailiffs in possession removing the furniture on behalf of his creditors. Almost fainting, he seated himself under a plane-tree, and there encountered the fair lady who had victimized him in the morning; she was walking with her dear uncle, and burst out laughing when she saw Memnon with the patch over his eye. Night came on, and he laid himself down on some straw beside the walls of his house. There he was seized with ague, and

in one of the fits he fell asleep, when a celestial spirit appeared to him in a dream.

He was all glittering with light. He had six beautiful wings, but no feet, nor head, nor tail, and was like nothing he had ever seen before.

"Who art thou?" said Memnon.

"Thy good genius," answered the other.

"Give me back my eye then, my health, my house, my property, and my prudence," said Memnon. Thereupon he told him how he had lost them all in one day.

"Such adventures as those never befall us in the world which we inhabit," said the spirit.

"And what world do you inhabit?" asked the afflicted mortal.

"My home," replied he, "is at a distance of five hundred millions of leagues from the sun, in a little star near Sirius, which thou seest from hence."

"Charming country!" exclaimed Memnon. "What! have you no sly hussies among you who impose upon a poor fellow, no intimate friends who win his money and knock out one of his eyes, no bankrupts, no satraps who mock you while they deny you justice?"

"No," said the inhabitant of the star, "nothing of the kind. We are never deceived by women, because we have none; we are never guilty of excesses at table, since we neither eat nor drink; we have no bankrupts, for gold and silver are unknown among us; we cannot have our eyes put out, because we do not possess bodies such as yours; and satraps never treat us with injustice, since all are equal in our little star."

Then said Memnon, "My Lord, without the fair sex and without any dinner, how do you manage to pass the time?"

"In watching over the other worlds which are entrusted to our care," said the genius; "and I am come now to minister consolation to thee."

"Alas!" replied Memnon, "why didst thou not come last night to prevent me committing such follies?"

"I was with Hassan, your elder brother," said the celestial being. "He is more to be pitied than thou art. His gracious Majesty, the King of India, to whose court he has the honor to be attached, has caused both his eyes to be put out for a slight act of indiscretion, and he is confined at the present moment in a dungeon, with chains upon his hands and feet."

"It is indeed well worth while to have a good genius in a family!" said Memnon. "Of two brothers one has an eye knocked out, and the other loses both; one lies on straw, the other in prison."

"Thy lot will change," answered the inhabitant of the star. "It is true that thou wilt never recover thine eye, but, for all that, thou wilt be tolerably happy, provided that thou dost never entertain the foolish idea of being perfectly wise and prudent."

The Pike's Roe

CU-SU, *a Disciple of Confucius, and* PRINCE KOU.

Kou. I cannot bear with the silliness of the sects about us. On one side is Laotze, whom his mother conceived by the junction of heaven and earth, and was for fourscore years pregnant with him. I as little believe his doctrine of

universal deprivation and annihilation as of his being born with white hair, or of his going to promulgate his doctrine riding on a black cow. The god *Fo* I put on the same footing, notwithstanding he had a white elephant for his father, and promises immortal life. One thing, at which I cannot forbear taking great offense, is that the priests continually preach such chimeras, thus deceiving the people in order the better to sway them. They gain for themselves respect by mortification, at which, indeed, Nature shudders. Some deny themselves, during their whole lives, the most salutary foods, as if there were no way of pleasing God but by a bad diet. Others carry a pillory about their necks, and sometimes they richly deserve it. They drive nails into their thighs, as into boards, and for this fanaticism the people follow them in crowds. On the king's issuing any edict which does not suit their humor, they coolly tell their auditors that this edict is not to be found in the commentary of the god *Fo,* and that god is to be obeyed in preference to men. Now, how am I to remedy this popular distemper, which is extravagant in the highest degree, and not less dangerous? Toleration, you know, is the principle of the Chinese, and, indeed, of all Asiatic governments, but such an indulgence must be owned to be highly mischievous, as exposing an empire to be overthrown on account of some fanatical notions.

Cu-Su. God forbid that I should try to extinguish in you the spirit of toleration, that quality so eminently respectable, and which, to souls, is what the permission of eating is to bodies. *By the law of Nature, every one may believe what he will, as well as eat what he will.* A physician is not to kill his patients for not observing the diet he had prescribed to them; neither has a sovereign a right to hang his subjects

for not thinking as he thinks; but he has a right to prevent disturbances, and, with prudent measures, he will very easily root out superstitions of all kinds. You know what happened to Daon, the sixth king of Chaldea, about four thousand years ago?

Kou. No. I pray you oblige me with an account of it.

Cu-Su. The Chaldean priests had taken it into their heads to worship the pikes of the Euphrates, pretending that a famous fish called *Oannes* had formerly taught them divinity; that this fish was immortal, three feet in length, and a small crescent was on the tail. In veneration of this *Oannes,* no pikes were to be eaten. A violent dispute arose among the divines, whether the fish *Oannes* had a soft or hard roe. Both parties not only fulminated excommunications, but, at several times, they came to blows. To put an end to such disturbances, King Daon made use of this expedient. He ordered a strict fast for three days to both parties, and at the expiration of it, sent for the sticklers of the hard-roed pike, who, accordingly, were present at his dinner. A pike was brought to him, three feet in length, and on the tail a small crescent had been put.

"Is this your god?" said he to the doctors.

"Yes, sir," answered they; "we know him by the crescent on the tail, and make no question but he is hard-roed."

On this, the king ordered the pike to be opened. It was found to have the finest melt that could be.

"Now," said the king, "you see that this is not your god, it being soft-roed." And the king and his nobles ate the pike. The hard-roed divines were not a little pleased that the god of their adversaries had been fried.

Immediately after, the doctors of the opposite side were sent for, and a pike of three feet, with a crescent on his tail,

being shown to them, they, with great joy, assured his Majesty that it was the god *Oannes,* and that he had a soft roe. But, behold! on being opened, it was found hard-roed. At this, the two parties, equally out of countenance, and still fasting, the good-natured king told them that he could only give them a dinner of pikes. And they greedily fell to eating both hard and soft roed, indiscriminately. This closed the war with great distinction for King Daon's wisdom and goodness, and since that time the people have been allowed to eat pikes as often as they pleased.

Kou. Well done, King Daon! And I give you my word that I will follow his example on every occasion, and, as far as I can, without injuring any one, and without worshiping *Fo's* or pikes. I know that in the countries of Pegu and Tonquin there are little gods and little Tapolins which bring down the moon, when in the wane, and clearly foretell what is to come; that is, they clearly see what is not. I will take care that the Tapolins shall not come within my reach to make futurity present, and bring down the moon. It is a shame that there should be sects rambling from town to town, propagating their delusions, as quacks do their medicaments. What a disgrace it is to the human mind, for petty nations to think that truth belongs to them alone, and that the vast empire of China is given up to error.—"*Dialogues.*"

François Arouet

The Liberty of the Will

A PHILOSOPHER *and his* FRIEND.

Phil. A battery of cannon is playing close by your ears; are you at liberty to hear or not to hear it?

Friend. Unquestionably, I cannot but hear it.

Phil. Would you have those cannon-balls carry off your head, and your wife's and daughter's, who are walking with you?

Friend. What a question! In my sober senses, it is impossible that I should will any such thing. I never could.

Phil. Well—you necessarily hear the explosion of those cannon, and you necessarily are against being, with your family, cut off by a cannon-shot, as you are taking the air. You have not the power not to hear, nor the power of willing to remain there.

Friend. Nothing more evident.

Phil. Accordingly, you have come thirty paces to be out of the cannon's way: thus you have had the power of walking that little space with me.

Friend. That also is clear.

Phil. And, if you had been paralytic, you could not have avoided being exposed to this battery. You would not have had the power of being where you are; you would necessarily not only have heard the explosion, but have received a cannon-shot; and thus you would undoubtedly have been killed.

Friend. Very true.

Phil. In what, then, consists your liberty, if not in the

power which your body has made use of to do, what your volition, by an absolute necessity, required?

Friend. You put me to a stand. Liberty, then, is nothing but the power of doing what I will?

Phil. Think of it, and see whether liberty can have any other meaning.

Friend. At this rate, my greyhound is as free as I am. He has necessarily a will to run at the sight of a hare, and likewise the power of running, if not lame; so that, in nothing am I superior to my dog. This is leveling me with the beasts.

Phil. Such are the wretched sophisms of those who have tutored you. Wretched to be in the same state of liberty as your dog? And are you not like your dog in a thousand things? In hunger, thirst, waking, sleeping? And your five senses, are they not also possessed by him? Are you for smelling otherwise than through the nose? Of hearing, except through the ears? Of seeing, without eyes? Why, then, are you for having liberty in a manner different from him?

Friend. How? Am I not at liberty to will what I will?

Phil. Your meaning?

Friend. I mean what all the world means. Is it not a common saying, will is free?

Phil. A proverb is no reason. Please to explain yourself more clearly.

Friend. I mean that I have the liberty of willing as I please.

Phil. By your leave, there is no sense in that. Do you not perceive that it is ridiculous to say, I will will. You will necessarily, in consequence of the ideas occurring to you. Would you marry? Yes or no?

Friend. What, were I to say, I neither will the one nor the other?

Phil. That would be answering like him who said: Some think that Cardinal Mazarin is dead, others believe him to be still living, but I believe neither the one nor the other!

Friend. Well, I have a mind to marry.

Phil. Good. That is something of an answer. And why have you a mind to marry?

Friend. Because I am in love with a young lady who is handsome, of a sweet temper, well-bred, with a tolerable fortune, sings charmingly, and her parents are people of good credit. Besides, I flatter myself that my addresses are very acceptable, both to herself and to her family.

Phil. Why, there is a reason. You see you cannot will without a reason, and I declare you have the liberty of marrying; that is, you have the liberty of signing the contract.

Friend. How? Not will without a reason? What, then, becomes of another proverb, *Sit pro ratione voluntas?* My will is my reason. I will, because I will.

Phil. My dear friend, under favor, that is an absurdity. There would then be in you an effect without a cause.

Friend. What! when I am playing at even and odd, is there a reason for my choosing even, rather than odd?

Phil. Yes, to be sure.

Friend. Pray, let me hear that reason.

Phil. Because the idea of odd presented itself to your mind before the contrary notion. It would be strange, indeed, that in some cases you will because there is a cause of volition; and that, in other cases, you will without any cause. In your willing to be married, you evidently perceive the determining reason. In playing at even and odd, you do not perceive it; and yet one there must be.

Friend. But again, am I not then free?

Phil. Your will is not free, but your actions are. You are free to act, when you have the power of acting.

Friend. But all the books I have read on the liberty of indifference——

Phil. Are nonsense. There is no such thing as the liberty of indifference. The phrase is void of sense, and was coined by people who were not overloaded with it.

—"*Dialogues.*"

First Day in France of a Huron

On the evening of the fifteenth day of July, in the year 1689, the Abbé de Kerkabon, prior of Our Lady of the Mountain, was walking on the sea-shore with Mlle. de Kerkabon, his sister, to take the air. The prior, already a little advanced in years, was a very good clergyman, beloved by his neighbors as he had formerly been by their wives. What had established his high reputation more than anything else was the fact that he was the only beneficed divine of that part of the country who did not require to be carried to bed after supping with his brethren of the cloth. He had a very decent knowledge of theology; and, when he was tired of reading St. Augustine, he entertained himself with Rabelais; moreover, nobody had an ill word to say of him.

Mlle. de Kerkabon, who had never been married, though that was not for want of wishing it, had preserved the freshness of her complexion to the age of five-and-forty. Her character was benevolent and sympathetic; she was fond of pleasure, no less than of devotion.

The prior, as he cast his eyes over the sea, said to his sister:

"Alas, it was here that our poor brother embarked with our dear sister-in-law, Mme. de Kerkabon, his wife, on board the frigate *Swallow* in 1669, to go and serve in Canada. If he had not been killed, we might be hoping to see him again."

"Do you believe," said Mlle. de Kerkabon, "that our sister-in-law was devoured by Iroquois Indians, as we have heard?"

"It is quite certain that if she had not been eaten up, she would have returned home. I shall mourn for her all my life—she was a charming woman; and our brother, who was remarkably clever, would assuredly have risen to a high position."

As both of them were melting to tears at these tender recollections, they saw a small vessel enter the mouth of the Rance with the tide; it contained some Englishmen who had come to sell certain produce of their country. They leaped ashore, without taking any notice of the prior or his sister, who was much shocked at this want of attention to herself.

This was not the case, however, with a very handsome young man, who sprang forward ahead of his companions, and found himself face to face with the lady. He saluted her with an inclination of the head, not being accustomed to making a bow. His figure and clothing attracted the notice of the brother and sister. His head and his legs were bare, his feet were shod with low sandals, and down his neck hung plaits of long hair; a tight-fitting jerkin showed off to advantage his slim and lithe figure. He had a martial mien, but not without a touch of mildness. He

held in one hand a small flask of Barbados water, and in the other a sort of bag in which he carried a goblet and some excellent sea-biscuit. He spoke French very intelligibly, and offered his Barbados water to Mlle. de Kerkabon and her brother; he drank some of it with them, he invited them to drink again, and all with an air so simple and natural, that both brother and sister were delighted with him. They asked how they could serve him, who he was, and where he was going. The young man answered them that he had no idea, that he was curious and wished to see what the shores of France were like, so he had come and was going to return.

His reverence the prior, judging from his accent that he was not an Englishman, took the liberty of inquiring to what country he belonged.

"I am a Huron," replied the young man.

Mlle. de Kerkabon, surprised and enchanted to see a Huron with such polite manners, invited the young fellow to supper; he did not require to be asked twice, and all three went together to the priory of Our Lady of the Mountain.

The plump little woman gazed at the stranger with all her eyes, which were not very large even when wide open, and whispered to the prior every now and again:

"This tall lad beside us has a color like that of the lily and the rose! What a fair skin he has for a Huron!"

"Very true, sister," said the prior.

She showered a hundred questions upon the traveler in quick succession, and he always answered her with great good sense.

The rumor soon spread that there was a Huron staying at the priory. Those who belonged to the best society in the neighborhood were eager to go and sup there. The

Abbé de Saint-Yves came with his sister, a beauty of Lower Brittany, young and very well educated. The magistrate of the district, the receiver of taxes, and their wives were also at supper. The stranger was placed between Mlle. de Kerkabon and Mlle. de Saint-Yves. Everybody looked at him with admiration, everybody spoke to him and questioned him at once; but the Huron was not in the least disconcerted; it seemed as if he had taken for his motto that of Lord Bolingbroke: *Nil admirari.* But at last, unable to endure so much noise, he said with a good-natured smile, but also with some decision:

"Gentlemen, in my country we are in the habit of speaking one after another; how do you expect me to answer you, when you prevent me from hearing what you say?"

The voice of reason always brings people to their senses at least for some moments, and a dead silence ensued. The magistrate, who always regarded strangers as his peculiar property, in whatever house he happened to find himself, and was famous all over the province for asking questions, opened his mouth about half a foot wide, and said:

"What is your name, sir?"

"I have always been called 'The Unsophisticated Child of Nature,'" answered the Huron, "and this name of mine was ratified in England, because I always say what I think in a natural manner, and do whatever I like."

"Being born a Huron, how, sir, did you manage to get to England?"

"Because I was taken there; I was made prisoner by the English in a battle, after having defended myself pretty stoutly; and the English, who love bravery, because they are brave themselves and as honorable as we are, having proposed to restore me to my kinsfolk or to take me with

them to England, I accepted the latter offer, because from my natural disposition I am passionately fond of seeing new countries."

"But, sir," said the magistrate, in his most imposing tone, "how could you desert your father and mother in that way?"

"Because I never have known either father or mother," said the stranger.

The company were moved with compassion, and everybody repeated:

"Neither father nor mother!"

"We will supply their place," said the mistress of the house to her brother the prior. "How interesting this Huron gentleman is, to be sure!"

The Unsophisticated thanked her with generous cordiality, and gave her to understand that he needed nothing.

"I perceive," said the grave magistrate, "that your French is better than could be expected from a Huron."

"A Frenchman," he replied, "whom we had captured, and with whom I formed a warm friendship, taught me his language when I was very young, in my own country; I learn very quickly what I wish to learn. On arriving at Plymouth, I met with one of your French refugees, whom you call Huguenots, why I know not. Under his instruction I made further progress in the knowledge of your tongue; and, now that I can express myself intelligibly, I am come to see your country, for I like French people very much—when they don't ask too many questions."

The Abbé de Saint-Yves, in spite of this little hint, inquired which of the three languages he liked best, his own native tongue, English, or French.

"My own, undoubtedly," answered the Child of Nature.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Mlle. de Kerkabon. "I always thought that French was the most beautiful of all languages, next to that of Lower Brittany."

Then a rivalry arose as to who should ask the Unsophisticated how the Hurons called different things, such as, what name they gave to "tobacco," to which he answered *taya;* how they expressed "to eat," and he answered *essenten.* Mlle. de Kerkabon insisted upon knowing what they said for "to make love"; he replied *trovander,* and maintained, not without some show of reason, that those words were quite as good as their French and English equivalents. *Trovander* especially seemed to all the company a very pretty expression.

The prior, who had in his library a Huron grammar, which had been given him by the Rev. Father Sagar Théodat, of the Reformed Franciscans, the famous missionary, left the table for a moment in order to go and consult it. He returned quite out of breath with tender and joyful emotion; he acknowledged the Unsophisticated as a genuine Huron. A short discussion next arose on the multiplicity of languages, and there was a general agreement that, had it not been for what happened at the Tower of Babel, all the world would have spoken French.

The question-loving magistrate, who had hitherto shown some distrust of the stranger, now began to feel a profound respect toward him, and addressed him more politely than he had done before—for what reason the Child of Nature could not comprehend.

Mlle. de Saint-Yves evinced great curiosity to know how the Hurons made love in their own country.

"By doing noble deeds," replied the youth, "to please persons like yourself."

All the guests were astonished, and applauded so apt an answer. Mlle. de Saint-Yves blushed, and was very pleased. Mlle. de Kerkabon also blushed, but was not quite so well pleased; she was a little piqued that the compliment had not been addressed to her, but she was so good-natured that her liking for the Huron underwent no alteration. She asked him, with kindly interest, how many sweethearts he had had in his own land.

"I have never had more than one," said the Unsophisticated; "it was Miss Abacaba, my dear nurse's great friend; the reeds were not more straight, the ermine was not whiter, lambs were not so mild, eagles not so proud, and the deer were less fleet of foot than Miss Abacaba. One day she was chasing a hare in our neighborhood, about fifty leagues from our settlement, when an Algonkin, an ill-bred fellow who lived a hundred miles away from us, came up and took the hare away from her. I heard of it, ran to the place, knocked down the Algonkin with a blow of my club, and brought him to the feet of my mistress, bound hand and foot. Abacaba's relations wanted to eat him, but I never had much taste for such kinds of feasts. I gave him back his liberty and made him my friend. Abacaba was so touched by my conduct, that she preferred me to all her other suitors. She would have loved me still, if she had not had the misfortune to be devoured by a bear. I had my revenge on the bear, and wore its skin for a long time, but somehow that did not seem to give me much consolation."

Mlle. de Saint-Yves, on hearing this narration, felt a secret pleasure at learning that the Child of Nature had never had more than one sweetheart, and that Abacaba was no longer alive; but she did not know the cause of her pleasure. All the company fixed their eyes on the Unsophisticated, and he

was highly commended for having prevented his comrades from eating up an Algonkin.

The inexorable magistrate, whose rage for asking questions was irrepressible, pushed his curiosity so far as to inquire to what religion the Huron gentleman belonged; whether he had chosen the Anglican, the Gallican, or the Huguenot Church.

"I am of my own religion, as you are of yours," said he.

"Alas!" said the prior's sister, "I see plainly that those wretched English people have not even thought of baptizing him."

"Good heavens!" said Mlle. de Saint-Yves; "how comes it that the Hurons are not Catholics? Have not the reverend Jesuit fathers converted them all?"

The Unsophisticated assured her that in his country no one was ever converted, that a true Huron had never changed his opinion, and that there was not even a term in their language to signify "inconstancy." These last words pleased Mlle. de Saint-Yves exceedingly.

"We'll baptize him! Yes, we'll baptize him!" said Mlle. de Kerkabon to the prior; "you shall have the honor of administering the rite, my dear brother, and I am determined to be his godmother; the Abbé de Saint-Yves shall present him at the font; it will be a most brilliant ceremony, and talked of all over Lower Brittany; moreover, it will be an infinite honor to us."

All the company supported the mistress of the house, exclaiming, "We'll have him baptized!"

The Unsophisticated replied that in England people were allowed to live according to their fancy; he intimated that the proposal did not please him at all, and that the laws of the Hurons were at least as good as those of the people of

Lower Brittany; he ended by saying that he was going to take his departure on the morrow. When his bottle of Barbados water was quite finished, all the company retired to bed.

After the Child of Nature had been conducted to his bedroom, Mlle. de Kerkabon and her friend Mlle. de Saint-Yves could not help looking through the key-hole, to see how a Huron slept. They saw that he had spread the bedclothes on the floor, and was reposing in the most graceful attitude imaginable.—"*The Unsophisticated Huron.*"

Jean Gresset

Ver-Vert

At Nevers once, some time ago,
  The pet of certain sisters there,
  Flourished a parrot, one so fair,
So trained in all a bird can know,
  As to deserve a better fate—
  Did happiness on merit wait.
Ver-Vert, such was the parrot's name,
  Young yet, and innocent of wrong,
Transplanted from some Indian stream,
  Was placed these cloistered nuns among.
Bright-hued was he, and gay, but sage;
Frank, as befitted childhood's age,
  And free from evil thought or word:
  In short he was the very bird
To choose for such a sacred cage.

Needs not to tell what love he won,
What cares received, from every nun;
How, next to the confessor, he
Reigned in each heart; and though it be
Sinful to weakness to succumb,
Ver-Vert, the bird, was first with some.
He shared in these serene retreats
The sirups, jellies, and the sweets
Made by the sisters to excite
The holy father's appetite.

For him 'twas free to do or say
Whate'er he pleased—'twas still his way.
No circle could be pleasant where
There was not in the midst Ver-Vert,
To whistle, chirrup, sing, and fly;
And all the while with modesty,
Just like a novice, timid yet,
And ever fearful to forget,
Never, unquestioned, silence broke,
Yet answered all, though twenty spoke;
Just as great Cæsar, between whiles,
Wrote all at once five different styles.

At night his pleasure was to roam
From one to other for a home;
Happy, too happy, was the nun
Whose cell his wayward choice had won.
He wandered here and wandered there,
But, truth to say, 'twas very rare
That fancy led him to the cell
Where any ancient dame might dwell.
No, rather would his choice be laid
Where some young sister's couch was made;
There would he sleep the long night through,
Till daylight broke and slumbers flew;
And then, so privileged and free,
The sister's first toilet might see.
Toilet I say, but whisper low,
Somewhere I've read, but do not know,
Nuns' mirrors must be quite as true
As, ladies, is required for you;

'And, just as fashion in the world
Must here be fringed and there be curled,
So also in the simple part
Of veils and bands there lies an art;
For that light throng of frivolous imps
  Who scale o'er walls and creep through bars,
Can give to stiffest veils and gimps
  A grace that satin never wears.
Of course, you guess, at such a school,
Ver-Vert, by parrot's instinct-rule,
  Endowed with speech, his ladies took
For pattern; and, except at meat,
When all the nuns in silence eat,
  Talked fast and long, and like a book.
He was not, mark, one of these light
And worldly birds, corrupted quite
By secular concerns, and who
Know mundane follies through and through;
  Ver-Vert was piously inclined;
'A fair soul led by innocence,
Unsullied his intelligence,
  No rude words lingered in his mind.
But then he knew each canticle,
  Oremus, and the colloquies,
His *Benedicite* said well,
  The litany, and charities.
Instructed still, he grows more wise,
The pupil with the teacher vies;
He imitates their very tones,
The softened notes, the pious groans,
The long-drawn sighs, by which they prove
How they adore, and how they love;

And knows at length—a holy part—
The breviary all by heart.

. . . . . .

But fame is full of perils; well
In lowly lot obscure to dwell.
Success too great, without reverse,
Oft makes the moral nature worse.
Thy name, immortal parrot, spread
Still wider, till by sad fate led,
It reached as far as Nantes. Here stood
The chief house of the sisterhood.
  Now not the last, as might be guessed,
Are nuns to hear of what goes on;
  And chattering still, like all the rest,
Of what was said and what was done,
  They heard of Ver-Vert, wondered much,
They talked and envied, talked and sighed
  (Great though his powers, his virtues such,
Had been by rumor magnified),
Until a common longing fell
On all alike this miracle
Themselves to see. A girl's desire
Is like a flame that leaps and burns;
  But ah! a fiercer, brighter fire,
Is when a nun with longing yearns.
  To Nevers fly all hearts; of naught
But Ver-Vert can the convent think.
  Could he—ah! could he here be brought!
The Loire is swift; ships do not sink.
Oh! bid him come, if but to show
For one day what a bird can know!

. . . . . .

On board the bark that on the wave
  Bore Ver-Vert from his patrons' care
Were three fair nymphs, two soldiers brave,
  A nurse, a monk, a Gascon pair:
Strange company and sad, I ween,
  For Ver-Vert, best of pious birds.
Innocent quite of what might mean
  Their strange garb and their stranger words,
He listened, 'mazed at first. The style
  Was new, and yet the words were old.
It was not gospel, truly; while
  The jokes they make, the tales they told,
Were marked by absence of those sweet
  Ejaculations, vows, and prayers,
Which *they* would make and he repeat.
  No Christian words are these he hears:
The bold dragoons with barrack slang
  Confused his head and turned his brain;
To unknown deities they sang
  In quite an unaccustomed strain.
The Gascons and the ladies three
Conversed in language odd but free;
The boatmen all in chorus swore
Oaths never heard by him before.
And, sad and glum, Ver-Vert sat still
In silence, though against his will.

But presently the bird they spy,
And for their own diversion try
To make him talk. The monk begins
With some light questions on his sins;

Ver-Vert looks up, and with a sigh,
"*Ave!* my sister," makes reply:
And as they roar with laughter long,
Suspects, somehow, he's answered wrong.
Proud was his spirit, until then
Unchecked by scoff of vulgar men;
And so he could not brook to see
His words exposed to contumely.
Alas, with patience, Ver-Vert lost
  The first bloom of his innocence.
That gone, how little did it cost
  To curse the nuns and their pretence
To teach him French? Well might they laugh:
The nuns, he found, had left out half—
The half, too, most for beauty made,
The nervous tone, the dainty shade;
To learn this half—the better lore—
He speaks but little, thinks the more.
  At first the parrot, so far wise,
Perceives that all he learned before,
  The chants, the hymns, the languid sighs,
And all the language of the nuns,
Must be forgotten, and at once.
In two short days the task was done,
And soldier's wit 'gainst prayer of nun,
So fresh, so bright, so pleasant seemed,
That in less time than could be dreamed
(Too soon youth lends itself to evil)
He cursed and swore like any devil.
  By steps, the proverb says, we go
From bad to worse, from sin to crime;
  Ver-Vert reversed the rule, and so
Served no novitiate's tedious time.

Full-fledged professor of all sin,
Whate'er they said he marked within;
Ran their whole dictionary through,
And all the wicked language knew;
Till one day, at an oath suppressed,
He finished it, with swelling breast.
Loud was the praise, great the applause;
  Poor Ver-Vert proudly looked around;
He, too, could speak by boatman's laws,
  He, too, this glorious half had found.
Then to his genius giving play,
He cursed and swore the livelong day.
Fatal example this, how pride
Young hearts from heaven may turn aside.

. . . . . .

The boat arrives, and at the stage
A sister waits, to take the cage.
Since the first letter sent, she sits
  With eyes turned ever up the stream,
And watching every sail that flits
  Across the wave, each, in her dream,
The bark that brings the saint Ver-Vert.
  He knew—corrupted bird—aright,
By that half-opened eye, that bare
  And scanty dress, those gloves so white,
The cross—by all these tokens good—
He knew, he knew the sisterhood.
Seeing her there, he trembled first,
And then in undertones he cursed,
For much he feared, and much he sighed,
  Thinking that all the blasphemies
In which he took such joy and pride
  Would change again to litanies.

And then he shrieked; she seized the cage,
In vain he pecked in useless rage;
  Bit the poor sister here and there,
For still she bore him to his fate,
Arrived within the convent gate,
  And told the advent of Ver-Vert.
The rumor ran. They ring the bells,
The sisters troop from choir and cells:
" 'Tis he, my sister, come at last! "
  They fly, they run, the old forget
The burden of the winters past;
  Some who were never known as yet
To haste their steps, came running now
  All joyous, eager all, and bright,
  As happy as if Ver-Vert's sight
Released them all from convent vow.

How can they do aught but admire
That form so full of youth and fire?
For Ver-Vert, though now steeped in harm,
  Had not, therefore, become less fair;
  That warlike eye, that dandy air,
Lent him at least a novel charm.
Ah, Heaven! why on a traitor's face
Waste all this beauty, all this grace?
  The sisters, charmed with such a bird,
Press round him, chattering all at once,
As is the way, I'm told, with nuns,
  That even thunder fell unheard.
He during all the clatter sat,
Deigning no word, or this, or that.

Only with strange, libertine gaze,
  Rolling his eyes from nun to nun.
First scandal. Not without amaze,
  The holy ladies saw how one
So pious could so rudely stare.
Then came the prioress, and there
First questioned him. For answer all,
  Disdainfully he spread his wings,
Careless what horror might befall,
  And thus replied to these poor things,
"Gadzooks! Ods bodikins! What fools!"
At this infringement of the rules
Which mere politeness teaches, "Fie,
  My dearest brother," one began.
In jeering tones he made reply,
Till cold her very life-blood ran.

"Great Heaven! Is this a sorcerer?
  Is this the saintly praying bird
They boast so much of at Nevers,
  Ver-Vert, of whom so much is heard?
Is this—" Here Ver-Vert, sad to say,
Took up the tale in his new way.
He imitated first the young,
The novices, with chattering tongue;
Their babble and their little ways,
Their yawning fits at times of praise.
  Then turning to the ancient ones,
Whose virtues brought respect to Nantes,
He mocked at large their nasal chants,
  Their coughs, their grumblings, and their groans.

But worse did follow. Filled with rage,
He beat his wings and bit the cage;
He thundered sacrilegious words
Ne'er heard before from beak of birds;
All that he'd learned on board the ship
Flowed now from that corrupted lip;
Terms fraught with horrid blasphemy
(Mostly beginning with a *d*)
Hovered about his impious beak—
The young nuns thought him talking Greek,
Till with an oath so full, so round,
  That even the youngest understood,
He ended. At the frightful sound
  Multivious fled the sisterhood,
All smitten with terrific panic,
Ran pell-mell from the imp satanic;
'Twas by a fall that Mother Ruth
Then lost her last remaining tooth.

Ver-Vert, replaced his cage within,
  The nuns resolved without delay
To purge the place of heinous sin
  And send the peccant bird away.
The pilgrim asks for naught beside;
  He is proscribed, pronounced accurst,
Guilty pronounced of having tried
  The virtue of the nuns; called worst
Of parrots. All in order due
  Attest the truth of this decree,
Yet weep that one so fair to view
  So very black of heart should be.

He goes, by the same sister borne,
  Whose feelings now are changed and sad.
Ver-Vert, of all his honors shorn,
  Is yet resigned, and even glad.
So is brought back to Nevers. Here,
  Alas! alas! new scandals come.
Untaught by shame, untouched by fear,
  With wicked words he welcomes home,
To these kind ladies manifests,
  Reading the dreadful letter through,
With boatmen's oaths and soldiers' jests,
  That all their sisters' wrath was true.
What steps to take? Their cheeks are pale,
  Their senses overwhelmed with grief;
With mantles long, with double veil,
  In council high they seek relief.
Nine ancient nuns the conclave make—
  Nine centuries assembled seem—
Here without hope, for old love's sake,
  Far from the girls whose eyes would stream
At thought of hurting him, the bird,
  Chained to his perch, is duly heard.
No good he has to say. They vote.
  Two sibyls write the fatal word
Of death; and two, more kindly taught,
  Propose to send him back again
To the profane place whence he came,
  Brought by a Brahman—but in vain:
The rest resolve, with common sense,
Two months of total abstinence,
Three of retreat, of silence four;

Garden and biscuits, board and bed,
And play shall be prohibited.
Nor this the whole; in all the space
Should he not see a pretty face.
A gaoler harsh, a guardian grim,
With greatest care they chose for him,
The oldest, ugliest, sourest nun,
An ape in veils, a skeleton,
Bent double with her eighty years;
She'd move the hardest sinner's tears.

So passed Ver-Vert his term; in spite
  Of all his gaoler's jealous care,
The sisters gave him some delight,
  And now and then improved his fare.
But chained and caged, in dungeon fast,
Bitter the sweetest almonds taste.
Taught by his sufferings to be wise,
Touched, maybe, by their tearful eyes,
The contrite parrot tries to turn
  Repentant thoughts from things of ill;
Tries holiness again to learn,
  Recovers soon his ancient skill,
And talks like any pious dean.
  Sure the conversion is not feigned,
The ancient conclave meet again,
  And to his prison put an end.
Oh! happy day, when Ver-Vert, free,
Returns his sisters' pet to be!
A festival, a day of joy,
With no vexation, no annoy,

Each moment given up to mirth,
  And all by love together bound!
But ah! the fleeting joy of earth
  Too soon is untrustworthy found:
The songs, and chants, and cheerful hours,
The dormitory wreathed with flowers,
Full liberty, a tumult sweet,
  And nothing, nothing that could tell
Of sorrow hiding 'neath their feet,
  Of death advancing to their cell.
Passing too quick from diet rude,
From plain dry bread to richer food,
With sugar tempted, crammed with sweets,
Tempted with almonds and such meats,
Poor Ver-Vert feels his roses change
Into the cypress dark and strange.
He droops, he sinks. In vain they try
  By every art to stave off fate.
Their very love makes Ver-Vert worse;
  Their cares his death accelerate.
Victim of love, of love he tires,
And with a few last words expires.
These last words, faint and hard to hear,
Vain consolation, pious were.

Clapiers de Vauvenargues

The Conceited Fool

THE fool who is full of vanity is the born enemy of talent. If he enters a house where a clever man is being entertained, and if the mistress does him the honor of presenting him, he bows indifferently and answers nothing. If one ventures to praise merit other than what consists in wealth before him, he sits down at a table, fingers the counters or shuffles the cards, without saying anything. If a book is shown which has made some stir in the world, Midas first glances at the end, then into the middle, declares that it is ill constructed and that he could never bring himself to read it through. You speak in his presence of a victory which Frederick the Great, the hero of the North, has gained over his enemies, and when you recount the prodigies of his skill and valor, Midas assures the company positively that the disposition of the battle was made by M. de Rottembourg, who was not there, and that the king hid in a hut until the enemy was routed. A man who was present at the battle declares that he saw the king charge at the head of his troops, but Midas coldly answers that one can expect nothing good of a prince, nor will he ever see anything but follies proceed from one who writes verses and is a friend of Voltaire.—"*Characters.*"

Clapiers de Vauvenargues

The Man of the World

A MAN of the world is not one who knows other men best, who has the most of foresight or skill in practical affairs, who is best instructed by experience or study. He is neither a good economist, nor a scholar, nor a politician, nor an enlightened official, nor a laborious magistrate. He is a man who knows nothing, and who is ignorant of nothing; who, a bungler in his own trade, whatever it be, believes himself expert in the trades of others; a man who has much useless wit, who can speak flatteries which do not flatter, say sensible things which do not instruct; who can persuade no one, well though he speak; gifted with that kind of eloquence which can create trifles or recall them to life, and reduce great subjects to nothing; of penetrating insight as to the external ridiculousness of men, but blind as to their souls; a man rich in words, who, powerless to impress by good sense, struggles to strike by singularity; who, fearful of wearying by logic, wearies by his inconsequence and digressions; who is lively without gaiety, and intense without passion; who needs a continual change of the places and the things that interest him, and yet is powerless to supply, by the variety of his amusements, the failings of his inner man. If several persons of this character happen to meet, and cannot arrange a game of cards, these men, who have so much brain, have not enough for half an hour's conversation, even with women, without tiring each other. All their tricks, their jests, their news, their reflections, are exhausted in a moment. He who is not playing at quadrille or ombre, must watch those who are, in order that he may not come face to face with one

to whom he has nothing to say. All these good people who have banished sense from their conversation are living examples of its necessity.—*"Characters."*

Reflections

When a thought is too feeble to bear simple expression, it is better left unuttered.

There are few constant passions, though many sincere ones. Formerly men affected a false constancy, to-day they affect a false indifference. 'Tis all according to the fashion.

If you feel that it is some fault in yourself that prevents you from gaining the esteem of a certain person, then you are sure to hate him.

Certain fools, sitting together at table said, "We alone are good company." And they believed each other.

We are less hurt by the contempt of fools than by the coldness of wise men.

Why believe that poverty improves a man's morals?

A great man undertakes a great thing because it is great; a fool because he considers it easy.

Rogues are always surprised at honesty in others.

Denis Diderot

Beware of Genius!

He accosted me with, "I am glad to see you again, my philosopher. But why do you sit here and watch these fools at their wretched games of chess and draughts?"

I. Because I have nothing better to do at this moment than to watch good players.

He. Pshaw! Except Légal and Philidor, they know nothing of the game.

I. And M. de Bussy? What do you say to him?

He. He is a chess-player in the sense in which Clairon is an actress. Both know of playing all that can be *learned.*

I. You are hard to please, and only the consummate master seems to find favor in your eyes.

He. Yes, in games, in poetry, in eloquence, music, and the like fooleries. What is the good of mediocrity in these matters?

I. I could almost agree with you. And yet many must practise these arts that the man of genius may shine more brightly. But let that rest. I've not seen you for an age. I never think of you when I don't see you. But I am always pleased when you appear. What have you been doing?

He. What you do and everybody—good, evil, and nothing. I have been hungry, and have eaten when opportunity came. Furthermore, I have been thirsty, and have often drunk. I let my beard grow and had it shaved again.

I. You should not have done it. The beard alone is lacking to stamp you as a sage.

He. True enough. My forehead is high and furrowed, my eye brilliant, my nose protuberant, cheeks broad, eyebrows heavy, and the whole face square. Were this large chin of mine covered by a beard, it would make a fine showing in bronze or marble.

I. Next to the busts of Cæsar, Marcus Aurelius, or Socrates.

He. No, I should rather stand between Diogenes and Phryne. I am as impudent as the one, and have a weakness for the other.

I. And you are well, I suppose?

He. Usually, yes; to-day, not specially.

I. Why, I should think with that face of yours——

He. My face? Ah, well, the evil humor that dries up my uncle fattens his nephew.

I. Do you ever see your uncle nowadays?

He. I sometimes pass him in the street.

I. Is he not kind to you?

He. Is he kind to any one? I imagine not. He is a philosopher, in his way, thinks only of himself, and considers the rest of the world to be a mere pig's bladder. His wife and daughter may die for all he cares, if only the church-bells that sound his death-chimes ring in perfect accord. He is a happy man, and, like all men of genius, noticeable for the fact that he is good for one thing only, and for nothing else. Geniuses do not know what it is to be citizens, fathers, mothers, or friends. One would not care to have the seed of genius broadcast. Men we require, not men of genius. By Heaven, no! They try to turn the world topsy-turvy, and in the present prevalence of folly almost gain their end. The wisdom of the monk in Rabelais, that is the true wisdom that tends to peace. To do what is right, always speak well

of the good prior, and let the world wag its own way. And the world gets along well enough, for the majority is satisfied with it. Did I know any history, I would show you that all evils have proceeded from men of genius; but I know no history because I know nothing. The devil take me if, though I have never learned anything, I find myself any the worse for it. Once I dined with a minister of the king who had sense enough for a dozen. He demonstrated to us as clearly as that twice two is four, that nothing is more useful to nations than falsehood, nothing more harmful than truth. I don't remember how he proved it, but it followed as clear as day, that all men of genius are rascals, and that a child who showed the dangerous symptoms of becoming one should at once be strangled or drowned.

—*"Rameau's Nephew."*

Caron de Beaumarchais

The Barber's Soliloquy on His Career

FIGARO (*alone, walking to and fro, and speaking in a very mournful tone*).

OH, woman, woman, woman, weak and deceitful creature! No created thing can fail to betray its instinct, and is it yours to deceive? After having obstinately refused me when I urged her before her mistress; at the very moment when she gave me her word, in the very midst of the ceremony— He laughed while reading, the perfidious wretch, and I stood there like a booby! No, Sir Count, you shall not have her, you shall not! Because you are a great lord, you consider yourself a great genius. Noble birth, a great fortune, high rank and offices—all that tends to make one proud. What have you done to deserve these good things? You have condescended to be born, that's all. You are a commonplace fellow enough in all else; while I, upon my faith, lost in a crowd of obscurities, must use more wisdom and forethought for a bare living than it has taken to govern all Spain for a century. And you would oppose me— Some one is coming. It's she. It's nobody. The night is black as the devil, and here am I, practising the foolish trade of a husband, although I am but half a one! Could anything be more grotesque than my fate! The son of I know not whom, stolen by bandits, brought up in their ways, I become disgusted with all this, and wish to pursue an honest life, but am rebuffed at every hand! I study chemistry, pharmacy, surgery, and

all the needs of a great lord hardly serves to put into my hand the lancet of a horse-doctor! Weary of grieving the poor beasts, and in order to engage upon an entirely different career, I throw myself with might and main on the drama. If I had only tied a stone about my neck! I put together a comedy on the manners of the seraglio. A Spanish author, I think, may jeer at Mohammed without scruple. At the same moment an ambassador, from Heaven knows where, complains that in my verses I offend the Sublime Porte, Persia, half of the Indian peninsula, the whole of Egypt, and the kingdoms of Barca, Tripoli and Tunis, Algeria and Morocco; so there's my comedy knocked on the head to please these Mohammedan princes, not one of whom, I wager, can read. My cheeks become hollow, my rent falls due; I see a brutal bailiff coming from afar, a pen sticking in his wig. A question arises as to the nature of wealth, and, as it is not necessary to have a thing in order to reason about it, I, having not a farthing, write about the value of money and on its net produce; no sooner done than I see lowered for me the bridge of a strong castle, at whose gate I leave hope and liberty behind. Weary of feeding an obscure lodger, they put me into the street one day; and, as one must needs dine, though out of prison, I sharpen my pen again, and go about asking what is the question of the day. I am told that during my economic retreat there has been established at Madrid a reign of liberty for the sale of all productions, even those of the press; and that, provided only that I speak in my writings neither of the law nor of religion, nor politics, nor morals, nor those in authority, nor the opera or other public spectacles, nor of anybody connected with anything, I may print freely under the inspection of two or three censors. To profit by this charming liberty, I announce a periodical,

and, in the belief that I am not following any one's footsteps, I name it *The Useless Newspaper*. A thousand poor fools rise up against me. I am suppressed, and there I am, again without employment! I am near despair when I am given the hope of a place, but, unfortunately, I am fit for it. An accountant is needed; they take a dancer. What is left but to steal? I become a faro-banker. Then, my dear people, I sup in town, and the fashionable folk courteously open their houses to me, and keep three-quarters of the profit for themselves. I might have risen in the world. I begin even to see that in order to gain riches knowingness is better than knowledge. But as every one about me, though stealing all he can, requires me to be honest, I am on the point of starving again. I want to leave the world at once. I want to put twenty fathoms of water between us, but a kindly deity recalls me to my first vocation. I take my razor-case and my English strop, and, leaving conceit to the fools who feed on it, and shame in the middle of the road, a burden too heavy for one who travels afoot, I go from town to town shaving folk, and live free from care at last. A great lord passes through Seville; he recognizes me, I put him in the way of getting married, and as a reward for my having secured him a wife, he wants to get mine from me! An intrigue arises, a very storm. About to fall into an abyss, at the moment of marrying my mother, my kindred come upon me in confusion. They all debate: it's you, it's he, it's I, it's we; no, it's none of us; well, but who, then, who? Oh, what an absurd muddle! How has it all happened to me? And why this and not something else?

—*"The Marriage of Figaro."*

Caron de Beaumarchais

Varieties of Truth

FIGARO *and* SUZANNE.

Suz. None of the things which you have planned, my friend, and which we are waiting for, have yet come to pass.

Fig. Chance has done better than all of us, little one. The way of the world is this: one works, one plans, one arranges, on this hand; on the other, it is fate that really rules, and, from the greedy conqueror who would like to swallow the earth, down to the harmless blind man led by his dog—all are the playthings of fortune's caprice. But the blind man with his dog is at times more safely led and less mistaken in his views than the other blind man in the midst of his flatterers. As for that amiable little blind fellow whose name is love——

Suz. Ah, that's the only one who interests me!

Fig. Permit me, then, taking service with folly, to be the good dog who leads him to your dear little door, and we shall be provided with lodgings for life.

Suz. Love and you?

Fig. I and love.

Suz. And you will seek no other home?

Fig. If you take me there, may a thousand million gallants——

Suz. You are going to exaggerate; tell me truthfully——

Fig. It's the truth, the real truth.

Suz. Fie, you wretch! Can one speak several kinds of truth?

Fig. Yes, indeed. Since it has been remarked that with time old follies become wisdom, and that very ancient little lies have produced very great truths, there are a thousand

kinds. There is the kind of truth that one knows, but dares not tell, for it is not well to tell every truth; and there is the kind one proclaims without having any faith in it, for it is not well to believe every truth; then there are passionate vows, mothers' threats, the protestations of men in their cups, the promises of high officials, the last word of a haggling merchant—the list is infinite. It is only my love for Suzanne that is a truth beyond doubt.

Suz. I love your gaiety because it is folly, and tells me that you are happy. But let us discuss the meeting with the count.

Fig. Or rather let us not discuss it; it has nearly cost me Suzanne.

Suz. Then you do not wish it to take place?

Fig. If you love me, Suzanne, give me your word of honor on this point; let him shiver alone, and let that be his punishment.

Suz. It cost me so little to give him my word, that I can break it without much trouble. There is no question of the meeting now.

Fig. Is that the real truth?

Suz. I am not like you clever people; for me there is only one kind.

Fig. And you will love me a little?

Suz. Much.

Fig. That's hardly anything.

Suz. And why?

Fig. In love, you see, not even too much is enough.

Suz. I do not understand these fine distinctions, but I will love no one save my husband.

Fig. Keep your word, and you will be a good exception to the rule.—"*The Marriage of Figaro.*"

Jacques Delille

Hail, Coffee!

Coffee affords a good restoring draft,
Which clears the fumes of wine too freely quaffed.
By her you gain, when you the table quit,
A calm more courteous, and a brighter wit;
And soon recovered, by her powerful aid,
You are not of a second feast afraid.
She by the god of verse is praised and loved;
The poet's genius is by her improved.
Your frigid rimers, if at times inspired,
Write their best lines by coffee's fragrance fired.
She can enliven philosophic plan,
And make an analyst a pleasant man.
Statesmen, through her, well feasted and content,
Form happy schemes of better government.
Knowledge sometimes to journalists she brings
Of court intrigues, and deep designs of kings.
Peace, truces, wars, she to his dreams can show,
And lets him, for three pence, the world o'erthrow.

M. A. Désaugiers

The Eternal Yawner

Ah! well-a-day, in all the earth
What can one do?
Where for amusement seek, or mirth?
Ah! well-a-day, in all the earth
What can one do
To cease from yawning here below?

Of mortal man, what is the rôle?
To bustle, eat, and labor ply;
To plot, grow old, and then to die?
Not very lively this, or droll.
Ah! well-a-day, etc.

No wonder in my mind begets
The sun, which poets call sublime;
Not this the first or second time
He rises, runs his race, and sets.
Ah! well-a-day, etc.

To one dull course the seasons cling:
For full five thousand years we view
The summer following after spring,
And winter autumn's close pursue.
Ah! well-a-day, etc.

M. A. Désaugiers

My watch (a friend of little use),
  Whose hands their tedious circuit ply,
  Tells me how slow the hours fly,
Not how I may my hours amuse.
        Ah! well-a-day, etc.

I half the world have traveled o'er,
  To see if men diversion found;
  But everywhere, on every ground,
I saw what I had seen before.
        Ah! well-a-day, etc.

In weariness which I abhorred,
  Wishing to know how sped the great,
  I dined with men of high estate,
And mumured as I left their board,
        Ah! well-a-day, etc.

Wishing to see if, when in love,
  Life some unworn amusement has,
  Love I attempted, but alas!
Love in all climes the same doth prove.
        Ah! well-a-day, etc.

Thus being, at this early age,
  Of all things sick, both night and day,
  In hopes to be more blithe and gay
I did in settled life engage.
        Ah! well-a-day, etc.

The street where now my life I led,
  By neighborhood my steps brought on
  To th' Institute and Odéon,
Which every day I visited.
        Ah! well-a-day, etc.

By writing this (hope quickly gone),
  To cheer my spirits I essayed;
  But yawned the while this song was made,
And now I sing it, still I yawn:
        Ah! well-a-day, etc.

P. J. de Béranger

The Dead Alive

When a bore gets hold of me,
  Dull and overbearing,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as herring.
When the thrusts of pleasure glib
  In my sides are sticking,
Poking fun at every rib,
  I'm alive and kicking.

When a snob his £ s. d.
  Jingles in his breeches,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as ditches.
When a birthday's champagne-corks
  Round my ears are clicking,
Marking time with well-oil'd works,
  I'm alive and kicking.

Kings and their supremacy
  Occupy the table,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as Abel.
Talk about the age of wine
  (Bought by cash or ticking),
So you bring a sample fine,
  I'm alive and kicking.

When a trip to Muscovy
  Tempts a conquest glutton,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as mutton.
Match me with a tippling foe,
  See who first wants picking
From the dead man's field below,
  I'm alive and kicking.

When great scribes to poetry
  March, by notions big led,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as pig-lead.
When you start a careless song,
  Not at grammar sticking,
Good to push the wine along,
  I'm alive and kicking.

When a bigot, half-hours three,
  Spouts in canting gloom's tones,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as tombstones.
When in cloisters underground,
  Built of stone or bricking,
Orders of the screw you found,
  I'm alive and kicking.

Bourbons back in France we see
  (Sure we don't much need 'em),
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as freedom.

Bess returns, and still our throats
  Find us here a-slicking,
Sitting free without our coats—
  I'm alive and kicking.

Forced to leave this company,
  Bottle-wine and horn-ale,
Be so kind as pray for me,
  I'm as dead as door-nail.
Pledging, though, a quick return,
  Soon my anchor sticking
On the shore for which I yearn—
  I'm alive and kicking.

—"*Songs.*"

The King of Yvetot

It was a king of Yvetot,
  Whom few historians name;
A sleeper fast, a waker slow,
  No dreams had he of fame.
By Betty's hand with night-cap crown'd,
He snored in state—the whole clock round—
  Profound!
Ha! ha! ha! ha! Ho! ho! ho! ho!
A kingdom match with Yvetot!
  Ho! ho!

Four goodly meals a day, within
  His palace-walls of mud,

He stow'd beneath his royal skin;
  And on an ass—his stud—
In triumph through his realm would jog,
His guard, with vigilance agog—
                A dog!
Ha! ha! ha! ha! Ho! ho! ho! ho!
A kingdom match with Yvetot!
                Ho! ho!

No costly regal tastes had he,
  Save thirstiness alone;
But ere a people blest can be,
  We must support the throne!
So from each cask new tapp'd he got
(His own tax-gath'rer), on the spot,
                A pot!
Ha! ha! ha! ha! Ho! ho! ho! ho!
A kingdom match with Yvetot!
                Ho! ho!

So well he pleased the damsels all,
  The folks could understand
A hundred reasons him to call
  The Father of his Land.
His troops he levied in his park
But twice a year—to hit a mark,
                And lark!
Ha! ha! ha! ha! Ho! ho! ho! ho!
A kingdom match with Yvetot!
                Ho! ho!

To stretch his rule he never sought;
  No neighbors' slumbers vexed;
To frame his laws (as good kings ought)
  Took pleasure's code for text.
He never caused his subjects dear
To shed save only on his bier—
                A tear!
Ha! ha! ha! ha! Ho! ho! ho! ho!
A kingdom match with Yvetot!
                Ho! ho!

The portrait of this prince serene,
  The greatest of his line,
In Yvetot may still be seen,
  His fav'rite beer-shop's sign!
On holidays the boozing crowd
Shout, pledging deep the relic proud,
                Aloud,
Ha! ha! ha! ha! Ho! ho! ho! ho!
He was the king for Yvetot!
                Ho! ho!

—*"Songs."*

Lizzy's Peccadillos

Liz, as mistress o'er all,
  E'en my wine, you may reign;
But 'tis martyrdom for me
  To ask it in vain.

And if glasses you count
  At my age, fickle jade—
Pray, have I ever counted
  The slips you have made?
Ah, Liz, all along
  You've deceived me—and yet
I would fain have a bumper,
  To toast my grisette!

Lindor's impudence spoils
  All the tricks you devise:
Softly breathed are his words;
  Deeply drawn are his sighs.
Of his tenderest hopes
  I'm instructed by him—
Lest I scold you for this,
  Fill at least to the brim!
Ah, Liz, all along
  You've deceived me—and yet
I would fain have a bumper,
  To toast my grisette!

With Clitander so blest
  When I caught you at last,
You were tenderly counting
  The kisses that passed.
To redouble their sum
  Didn't cause you much pain—
Come, for all of those kisses
  Fill, fill up again!
Ah, Liz, all along
  You've deceived me—and yet

P. J. de Béranger

I would fain have a bumper,
  To toast my grisette!

Giving jewels and lace
  Mondor, free of his purse,
Plays with you in my presence,
  Nor finds you averse.
Nay, I've seen him, grown bold,
  Put his arm round your waist—
For a rascal so great
  To the dregs let me taste!
Ah, Liz, all along
  You've deceived me—and yet
I would fain have a bumper,
  To toast my grisette!

Then I saw, as I entered
  Your chamber one night,
Through the window a robber
  On tiptoe take flight.
'Twas the rogue I had sent
  From your parlor, that eve—
Come, a fresh bottle bring,
  Lest too much I perceive.
Ah, Liz, all along
  You've deceived me—and yet
I would fain have a bumper,
  To toast my grisette!

All enriched with your favors,
  We've both the same friends;

Those of whom *you* are weary
  My favor attends.
But, then, traitress, with them
  You must let me drink deep;
Be my mistress for aye,
  And our friends let us keep!
Ah, Liz, all along
  You've deceived me—and yet
I would fain have a bumper,
  To toast my grisette!

—*"Songs."*

The Education of Young Ladies

WHAT! this Monsieur de Fénélon
  The girls pretend to school!
Of Mass and needlework he prates;
  Mama, he's but a fool.
Balls, concerts, and the piece just out,
Can teach us better far, no doubt:
Tra la la la, tra la la la,
Thus are young ladies taught, Mama!

Let others mind their work; I'll play,
  Mama, the sweet duet,
That for my master's voice and mine
  Is from Armida set.
If Rénaud felt love's burning flame,
I feel some shootings of the same:
Tra la la la, tra la la la,
Thus are young ladies taught, Mama!

P. J. de Béranger

Let others keep accounts; I'll dance,
  Mama, an hour or two;
And from my master learn a step
  Voluptuous and new.
At this long skirt my feet rebel;
To loop it up a bit were well.
Tra la la la, tra la la la,
Thus are young ladies taught, Mama!

Let others o'er my sister watch;
  Mama, Id rather trace—
I've wondrous talent—at the Louvre
  The Apollo's matchless grace:
Throughout his figure what a charm!
'Tis naked, true—but that's no harm!
Tra la la la, tra la la la,
Thus are young ladies taught, Mama!

Mama, I must be married soon,
  Even fashion says no less;
Besides, there is an urgent cause,
  I must, Mama, confess.
The world my situation sees—
But there they laugh at scrapes like these.
Tra la la la, tra la la la,
Thus are young ladies taught, Mama!

—"*Songs.*"

The Little Man in Gray

In Paris lives a little man
  Who's always dressed in gray:
His chubby cheeks like apples glow;
His pockets can't a stiver show;
  Yet, happy as the day,
"Ho," quoth the little man in gray,
"I laugh at all things—that's my way!"
And, sure, the gayest of the gay
Is he, the little man in gray!

In running after pretty girls,
  In running up a score,
Hobnobbing, singing, into debt
He runs head over heels; and yet
  When duns or bailiffs bore,
"Ho," quoth the little man in gray,
"I laugh at all things—that's my way!"
And, sure, the gayest of the gay
Is he, the little man in gray!

Let rain into his garret leak;
  Let him, unconscious soul,
Sleep in it; 'mid December's snow
Let him his freezing fingers blow,
  For lack of wood or coal;
"Ho," quoth the little man in gray,
"I laugh at all things—that's my way!"

And, sure, the gayest of the gay
Is he, the little man in gray!

His comely wife some mode adopts
  For picking up gay dresses;
So that the gayer she appears,
The more at him the public jeers:
  But while the truth he guesses,
"Ho," quoth the little man in gray,
"I laugh at all things—that's my way!"
And, sure, the gayest of the gay
Is he, the little man in gray!

When on his tattered bed the gout
  Has brought him to his level;
And when the priest, called in, begins
To talk to him of all his sins,
  Of Death, and of the devil,
"Ho," quoth the little man in gray,
"I laugh at all things—that's my way!"
And, sure, the gayest of the gay
Is he, the little man in gray!

—*"Songs."*

The Boxers

THOUGH "shocking bad" the hats they wear,
I like these English, I declare;
"G— d—"—they've such a cheerful air!
So polished are they; so inclined
In pleasures to what's most refined.

We have them not—no, no, no, no—
These fisticuffs, that luster throw
On England, here are not the go.

In Paris, then, behold the boxers!
Quick, to the notary let us flock, sirs,
And have our bets recorded there!
One against one—the fight is fair:
Such odds with Englishmen are rare.
We have them not—no, no, no, no—
These fisticuffs, that luster throw
On England, here are not the go.

Mark there upon the stage what grace
In those two hearty blades we trace—
A charm that nothing can efface:
Porters one might believe such chaps;
But they're a brace of lords, perhaps!
We have them not—no, no, no, no—
These fisticuffs, that luster throw
On England, here are not the go.

Well, ladies, how like you the sight?
You're to decide how goes the fight.
But what! it knocks you down with fright!
Pshaw! clap your hands! One's tapped a vein—
Oh, Heavens! these English are humane!
We have them not—no, no, no, no—
These fisticuffs, that luster throw
On England, here are not the go.

P. J. de Béranger

Britons, from you we'll patterns draw
In all things—fashion, taste, and law—
Nay, also in the art of war:
Your studs and diplomatic fry
Have not quite drained our bravos dry.
We have them not—no, no, no, no—
These fisticuffs, that luster throw
On England, here are not the go.

—*"Songs."*

Honoré de Balzac

The Suffix "Rama"

THE boarders, including those who dined at Mme. Vauquer's table, but did not live in the house, now began to drop in one by one, and exchanged greetings. They also exchanged a great many of those verbal nothings that pass, among a certain class of Parisians, for the tokens of a humorous spirit—observations of which stupidity is the backbone, and whose effect depends on a gesture or a freak in pronunciation. This kind of jargon is always changing. There is always a conventional principle in the prevailing form of jest, and this principle seldom lasts a month. It may refer to an occurrence in political life, or a case in the police courts, or a street song, or the gag of a comedian—anything will serve to keep going this game of wit that consists in playing at battledore and shuttlecock with the words and ideas that happen to be in the air. At the date of which we write, the diorama, in which optical illusion was carried a stage further than in the panorama, had just been invented, and the studios of Paris had accordingly set the fashion of talking of everything in terms of *rama*. The fashion, or the infection, had been brought to the Vauquer establishment by a young painter who dined there.

"Well, M. Poiret," said the lively official from the museum, "how is your health*orama?*" Then, without waiting for Poiret's reply, "Ladies," he said to Mme. Couture and Victorine, "you look sad."

"Are we going to dine?" cried Horace Bianchon, a med-

ical student, and friend of Rastignac; "my little stomach is gradually sinking down to my heels."

"It's a rare old frizz*orama!*" said Vautrin. "Now, then, Father Goriot, move round a bit— Ye gods! your feet stop up the mouth of the stove."

"Illustrious M. Vautrin," said Bianchon, "why do you say frizz*orama?* It is a mistake; you should say freez-*orama.*"

"No!" interposed the museum official. "It is frizz*orama;* according to the rule you should say: *my feet are frizzen.*"

"Ha, ha!"

"Here is his excellency the Marquis of Rastignac, Doctor of Right-About!" cried Bianchon, seizing Eugène by the neck, as if to strangle him. "Hi there! Help! Help!"

Mlle. Michonneau entered quietly, bowed to the company without speaking, and went and sat beside the other three women.

"That old bat always makes me shiver," said Bianchon to Vautrin, indicating Mlle. Michonneau. "I have studied Gall's system, and I find she has the bumps of Judas."

"Did you know Judas?" asked Vautrin.

"Who hasn't known him?" answered Bianchon. "Upon my word, that white-faced old maid affects me like one of those long worms which will gnaw their way through the length of a beam if you give them time enough!"

"That is it," said the man of forty, drawing a comb through his whiskers—

> "And Rose, she has lived the life of a rose,
> One morning, and no more."

"Ha-ha! here is a rare old soup*orama,*" said Poiret, as Christophe entered with the tureen, looking very respectful.

"Excuse me, sir," said Mme. Vauquer, "it is cabbage soup."

All the young men burst into laughter.

"Done, Poiret!"

"Poiret is done!"

"Mark two points to Mama Vauquer," said Vautrin.

"Did anybody notice the fog this morning?" said the official.

"It was, indeed," said Bianchon, "a frantic and unparalleled fog, doleful, melancholy green fog, a broken-winded fog, a Goriot fog."

"A Gorio*rama,*" said the painter; "for you could see nothing in it."

"Hi! Lord Goriot, they're talking about you!"

Father Goriot was seated at the lower end of the table, near the door through which the servant brought the food. He raised his head, and at the same moment sniffed at a piece of bread which he lifted from beside his dinner napkin —an old trick, acquired in his business, which sometimes reasserted itself.

"Well?" cried Mme. Vauquer snappishly, in a voice that rose above the clatter of spoons and plates and the babble of voices, "isn't the bread good enough for you?"

"On the contrary, it is made from Étampes flour—flour of the best quality."

"How do you know that?" asked Eugène.

"By the whiteness, by the taste."

"By the taste of the nose, since you have to smell it," said Mme. Vauquer. "You are getting so economical, that by and by you may find out a way of living on the vapors from the kitchen."

"Be sure you patent the invention," said the official from the museum. "You will make a fortune out of it."

"Nonsense; he only does it to make us believe that he was a vermicelli-maker," said the painter.

"Then your nose is a corn-tester!" exclaimed the man from the museum.

"Corn what?" asked Bianchon.

"Corn-el."

"Corn-et."

"Corn-elian."

"Corn-ice."

"Corn-ucopia."

"Corn-poppy."

"Corn-wain."

"Corn-*orama!*"

Those replies came rattling like musketry from every part of the room. They provoked the more laughter because poor Father Goriot stared at his companions with the puzzled look of a man who is trying to make out the meaning of something said to him in a foreign language.

"Corn—?" he said to Vautrin, who sat beside him.

"Corny feet, old boy!" answered Vautrin, bringing his hand down on Father Goriot's head so heavily that he drove his hat down over his eyes.—"*Father Goriot.*"

Madame Firmiani's Reputations

THERE are not more idioms in the French language to-day than there are kinds of men in France. And so the various interpretations which these different kinds give to the same incident are at once curious and diverting. And you may

take the Parisian to generalize the proposition. Let us suppose, now, that you had asked one of those men whom one calls precise to offer an opinion of Mme. Firmiani. Without hesitation he would furnish you with the following inventory, "A handsome house in the Rue du Bac, richly furnished drawing-rooms, beautiful pictures, an income of a hundred thousand, and a husband who formerly served under the Government." After these remarks your precise friend, who is generally stout and dressed in black, smiles with self-satisfaction, sticks out his lower lip, and nods his head, as much as to say, "Fine people; no one can say anything against them." Ask him no further. He and the like of him estimate all things by figures, income, or real estate.

But let us suppose that you had met some idler, and had asked him the same question. "Mme. Firmiani," he will reply; "oh, yes, I attend her Wednesday receptions. Charming house." So Mme. Firmiani has here become metamorphosed into a house. And house here means not an architectural combination of stones; it is another idiom, and an untranslatable one, but frequently used by idlers.

But at this point your idler, generally sallow, but with a pleasant smile, a dispenser of airy trifles and of wit not his own, bends toward you and whispers in your ear, "I have never seen M. Firmiani. He fills his social position by managing his Italian estate, but his wife is French, and spends her money like a Parisian. Her tea is delicious. There are only a few houses in Paris like hers, where the visitor is at once amused and well fed. But she is very careful as to whom she receives; one meets only the best people there." Here the idler accentuates his remarks by gravely taking a pinch of snuff, seeming to add, "I go there,

but don't expect me to introduce you." To the idler Mme. Firmiani keeps a tavern without a sign.

"What in the world attracts you to Mme. Firmiani's? The court is not duller. Of what use is your intelligence to you if it does not, at least, keep you away from such houses as hers, where one hears nothing but rubbish?" It is an egotist whom you have questioned now; one of those individuals who would like to keep the universe under lock and key. They cannot forgive happiness, but only vices, failures, and infirmities. Aristocrats by inclination, they become democratic in order to find inferiors among their equals.

"Mme. Firmiani? She is one of those adorable women who seem to excuse Nature for her bungling work in making the ugly ones. She is simply delicious. I should like to be king simply to—" (Here three words are whispered in your ear). Shall I introduce you? The young collegian who answers thus is notorious for his impudence toward men and his timidity with women.

"Mme. Firmiani?" exclaims another, waving his stick. "I don't mind saying what I think of her. She's between thirty and thirty-five, rather faded, though fine eyes. Poor figure, thin contralto voice, well dressed, a touch or two of rouge, and charming manners; in a word, the remnants of a pretty woman still worth while falling in love with." This comes from a conceited friend, who has just eaten a good breakfast, and is about to take a canter. He no longer weighs his words, for at such moments conceit is pitiless.

A lover of the arts will tell you that Mme. Firmiani has a magnificent picture-gallery which you should see. To him she is merely a collection of painted canvases.

A woman. "Mme. Firmiani? I wish you wouldn't go there." This phrase is infinitely rich in possible inferences.

"Mme. Firmiani! A dangerous woman! A siren! She dresses well, has good taste, keeps other women nervous." This answer comes from a nagging woman.

An attaché. "Mme. Firmiani? She's from Antwerp, isn't she? She was handsome when I saw her in Rome ten years ago." Attachés have a mania for talking in Talleyrand fashion. Their wit is so delicate that their ideas are intangible. They are like billiard-players who miss cleverly. Generally they speak little; when they do, it is of Spain, Vienna, Italy, St. Petersburg. The names of countries are to them what springs are to a piece of mechanism. Touch them, and they go off like alarm-clocks.

"Doesn't this Mme. Firmiani see a great deal of the Faubourg Saint-Germain?" asks one who wishes to appear to know all about the best society, who sticks a *de* to every name from Dupin to Lafayette, and thereby dishonors it.

"Mme. Firmiani, sir? I don't know her." This gentleman is a duke who recognizes no woman unless she has been presented at court. His own title dates from Napoleon.

"Mme. Firmiani? Isn't she a retired opera-singer?" This is the idiot, who must know all about everything, and will rather lie than hold his tongue.

Two old ladies. The first (wrinkled face, peaked nose, harsh voice). "Who was this Mme. Firmiani?"

The second (little red face like a pomegranate, soft voice). "A Cadignan, my dear, niece of the old prince of that name, and hence a cousin of the Duke of Maufrigneuse."

Mme. Firmiani is a Cadignan. She may lack virtue, fortune, youth; she is a Cadignan for all that, and to be a Cadigan is to be like a prejudice—flourishing forever.

Thus people of every class were busy in circulating so much and such various information about Mme. Firmiani,

that it would be an idle task to reproduce it all. Let it suffice to say that any one interested in knowing her real character, yet unable to come into personal contact with her, would have had equally sound reasons for believing her to be dull or witty, virtuous or depraved, sensitive or thick-skinned, beautiful or ugly. In other words, there were as many Mme. Firmianis as social strata or religious sects.

—*"Madame Firmiani."*

Useful Stuttering

THE stutter which for years the old miser had assumed when it suited him, together with the deafness he sometimes complained of in rainy weather, was thought in Saumur to be a natural defect. Perhaps it may be as well to give the history of this impediment to the speech and hearing of M. Grandet. No one in Anjou heard better, or could pronounce more crisply the French language (with an Angevin accent) than the wily old cooper. Some years earlier, in spite of his shrewdness, he had been taken in by an Israelite, who in the course of the discussion held his hand behind his ear to catch sounds, and mangled his meaning so thoroughly in trying to utter his words that Grandet fell a victim to his humanity and was compelled to prompt the wily Jew with the words and ideas he seemed to seek himself to complete the arguments of the said Jew, to say what that cursed Jew ought to have said for himself; in short, to be the Jew instead of being Grandet. When the cooper came out of this curious encounter he had concluded the only bargain of which in the course of a long commercial

life he ever had occasion to complain. But if he lost at the time pecuniarily, he gained morally a valuable lesson; later, he gathered its fruits. Indeed, the good man ended by blessing that Jew for having taught him the art of irritating his commercial antagonist and leading him to forget his own thoughts in his impatience to suggest those over which his tormentor was stuttering. No affair had ever needed the assistance of deafness, impediments of speech, and all the incomprehensible circumlocutions with which Grandet enveloped his ideas, as much as the affair now in hand. In the first place, he did not mean to shoulder the responsibility of his own scheme. In the next, he was determined to remain master of the conversation and leave his real intentions in doubt.

"M-m-monsieur de B-B-Bonfons, you-ou said th-th-that b-b-bankruptcy c-c-could, in some c-c-cases, b-be p-p-prevented b-b-by——"

"By the courts of commerce themselves. It is done constantly," said de Bonfons, bestriding Grandet's meaning, or thinking he guessed it, and kindly wishing to help him out with it. "Listen!"

"Y-yes," said Grandet humbly, with the mischievous expression of a boy who is inwardly laughing at his teacher while he pays him the greatest attention.

"When a man is respected and important, as, for example, your late brother——"

"M-my b-b-brother, yes."

"——is threatened with insolvency——"

"They c-c-call it in-ins-s-solvency?"

"Yes; when his failure is imminent, the court of commerce to which he is amenable—please follow me attentively—has the power, by a decree, to appoint a receiver. Liquida-

tion, you understand, is not the same as failure. When a man fails, he is dishonored; but when he merely liquidates, he remains an honest man."

"T-t-that's very d-d-different, if it d-doesn't c-c-cost m-m-more," said Grandet.

"But a liquidation can be managed without having recourse to the courts at all. For," said the magistrate, sniffing a pinch of snuff, "don't you know how failures are declared?"

"N-n-no, I n-n-never t-t-thought," answered Grandet.

"In the first place," resumed the magistrate, "by filing the schedule in the record office of the court, which the merchant may do himself, or his representative for him, with a power of attorney duly certified. In the second place, the failure may be declared under compulsion from the creditors. Now if the merchant does not file his schedule, and if no creditor appears before the courts to obtain a decree of insolvency against the merchant, what happens?"

"W-w-what h-h-happens?"

"Why, the family of the deceased, his representatives, his heirs, or the merchant himself, if he is not dead, or his friends, if he is only hiding, liquidate his business. Perhaps you would like to liquidate your brother's affairs."

"Ah! Grandet," said the notary, "that would be the right thing to do. There is honor down here in the provinces. If you save your name—for it is your name—you will be a man——"

"A noble man!" cried the magistrate, interrupting his uncle.

"Certainly," answered the old man, "my b-b-brother's name was G-G-Grandet, like m-m-mine. Th-that's c-c-certain; I d-d-don't d-d-deny it. And th-th-this l-l-liquidation

might be, in m-m-many ways, v-v-very advan-t-t-tageous t-t-to the interests of m-m-my n-n-nephew, whom I l-l-love. But I must consider. I don't k-k-know the t-t-tricks of P-P-Paris. I b-b-belong to Sau-m-mur, d-d-don't you see? M-m-my vines, my d-d-drains—in short, I've my own b-b-business. I never g-g-give b-b-bills. What are b-b-bills? I t-t-take a good m-m-many, but I have never s-s-signed one. I d-d-don't understand such things. I have h-h-heard say that b-b-bills c-c-can be b-b-bought up."

"Of course," said the magistrate. "Bills can be bought in the market, less so much per cent. Don't you understand?"

Grandet made an ear-trumpet of his hand, and the magistrate repeated his words.

"Well, then," replied the old man, "there's s-s-something to be g-g-got out of it? I kn-know n-nothing at my age about such th-th-things. I l-l-live here and l-l-look after the v-v-vines. The vines g-g-grow, and it's the w-w-wine that p-p-pays. L-l-look after the v-v-vintage, t-t-that's my r-r-rule. My c-c-chief interests are at Froidfont. I c-c-can't l-l-leave my h-h-house to m-m-muddle myself with a d-d-devilish b-b-business I kn-know n-n-nothing about. You say I ought to l-l-liquidate my b-b-brother's af-f-fairs, to p-p-prevent the f-f-failure. I c-c-can't be in two p-p-places at once, unless I were a little b-b-bird, and——"

"I understand," cried the notary. "Well, my old friend, you have friends, old friends, capable of devoting themselves to your interests."

"All right!" thought Grandet; "make haste and come to the point!"

"Suppose one of them went to Paris and saw your brother Guillaume's chief creditor, and said to him——"

"One m-m-moment," interrupted the good man; "said wh-wh-what? Something l-l-like th-this: 'Grandet of Saumur this, Grandet of Saumur that. He l-l-loves his b-b-brother, he loves his n-nephew—Grandet is a g-g-good uncle; he m-m-means well. He has sold his v-v-vintage. D-d-don't declare a f-f-failure; c-c-call a meeting; l-l-liquidate; and then G-G-Grandet will see what he c-c-can do. B-b-better liquidate than l-let the l-l-law st-st-stick its n-n-nose in.' Eh, isn't it so?"

"Exactly so," said the magistrate.

"B-because, don't you see, M-m-monsieur de B-Bonfons, a man must l-l-look b-b-before he l-leaps. If you c-c-can't, you c-c-can't. M-m-must know all about the m-m-matter, all the resources and the debts, if you d-d-don't want to be r-r-ruined. Eh, isn't it so?"

"Certainly," said the magistrate; "I'm of opinion that in a few months the debts might be bought up for a certain sum, and then paid in full by an agreement. Ha! ha! you can coax a dog a long way if you show him a bit of lard. If there has been no declaration of failure, and you hold a lien on the debts, you come out of the business as white as the driven snow."

"Sn-n-now," said Grandet, putting his hand to his ear, "wh-wh-what about s-now?"

"But," cried the magistrate, "do pray attend to what I am saying."

"I am at-t-tending."

"A bill is merchandise—an article of barter which rises and falls in price. This is a deduction from Jeremy Bentham's theory about usury. That writer has proved that the prejudice which condemned usurers to reprobation was mere folly."

"When?" ejaculated the good man.

"Allowing that money, according to Bentham, is an article of merchandise," resumed the magistrate; "allowing also that it is notorious that the commercial bill bearing this or that signature is liable to the fluctuation of all commercial values, rises or falls in the market, is dear at one moment, and is worth nothing at another, the courts decide—ah! how stupid I am, I beg your pardon. I am inclined to think you could buy up your brother's debts for twenty-five per cent."

"D-d-did you c-c-call him Je-Je-Jeremy B-Ben——?"

"Bentham, an Englishman."

"That's a Jeremy who might save us a lot of lamentations in business," said the notary, laughing.

"Those Englishmen s-sometimes t-t-talk sense," said Grandet. "So, ac-c-cording to Ben-Bentham, if my b-b-brother's n-notes are worth n-n-nothing; is Je-Je— I'm c-c-correct, am I not? That seems c-c-clear to my m-m-mind—the c-c-creditors would be—no, would not be; I understand."

"Let me explain it all," said the magistrate. "Legally, if you acquire a title to all the debts of the Maison Grandet, your brother or his heirs will owe nothing to any one. Very good."

"Very g-good," repeated Grandet.

"In equity, if your brother's bills are negotiated—negotiated, do you clearly understand the term?—negotiated in the market at a reduction of so much per cent in value, and if one of your friends happening to be present should buy them in, the creditors having sold them of their own free-will without constraint, the estate of the late Grandet is honorably released."

"That's t-true; b-b-business is b-business," said the cooper.

"B-b-but st-still, you know, it is d-d-difficult. I h-have no m-money and n-no t-t-time."

"Yes, but you need not undertake it. I am quite ready to go to Paris; you may pay my expenses, they will only be a trifle. I will see the creditors and talk with them, and get an extension of time, and everything can be arranged if you add something to the assets so as to buy up all title to the debts."

"We-we'll see about th-that. I c-c-can't and I w-w-won't b-b-bind myself without— He who c-c-can't, can't; don't you see?"

"That's very true."

"I'm all p-p-put ab-b-bout by what you've t-t-told me. This is the f-first t-t-time in my life I have b-been obliged to th-th-think."—*"Eugénie Grandet."*

A Slight Misunderstanding

LOUIS XI had given the Abbey of Turpenay to a gentleman who, enjoying the revenue, had called himself M. de Turpenay. It happened that the king being at Plessis-les-Tours, the real abbot, who was a monk, came and presented himself before the king, and presented a petition, remonstrating with him that, canonically and monastically, he was entitled to the abbey, and that the usurping gentleman wronged him of his right, and therefore he called upon his Majesty to have justice done to him. Nodding his peruke, the king promised to render him contented. This monk, importunate as are all hooded animals, came often at the end of the king's meals, who, bored with the holy water of the

convent, called friend Tristan and said to him, "Old fellow, there is here a Turpenay who annoys me; rid the world of him for me."

Tristan, taking a frock for a monk, or a monk for a frock, came to this gentleman, whom all the court called M. de Turpenay, and, having accosted him, managed to lead him on one side, then, taking him by the button-hole, gave him to understand that the king desired he should die. He tried to resist, supplicating and supplicating to escape, but in no way could he obtain a hearing. He was delicately strangled between the head and the shoulders, so that he expired; and, three hours afterward, Tristan told the king that he was despatched. It happened five days later, which is the space in which souls come back again, that the monk came into the room where the king was, and when he saw him he was much astonished. Tristan was present; the king called him, and whispered into his ear:

"You have not done what I told you to."

"Saving your Majesty, I have done it. Turpenay is dead."

"Eh? I meant this monk."

"I understood the gentleman!"

"What, it is done, then?"

"Yes, your Majesty."

"Very well, then"—turning toward the monk—"come here, monk." The monk approached. The king said to him, "Kneel down." The poor monk began to shiver in his shoes. But the king said to him, "Thank God that He has not willed that you should be executed as I had ordered. He who took your estates has been instead. God has done you justice. Go and pray to God for me, and don't stir out of your convent."

This proves the good-heartedness of Louis XI. He might

very well have hanged the monk, the cause of the error. As for the aforesaid gentleman, it was given out that he had died in the king's service.—"*Droll Stories.*"

Innocence

When Queen Catherine was princess royal, to make herself welcome to the king, her father-in-law, who at that time was very ill indeed, she presented him from time to time with Italian pictures, knowing that he liked them much, being a friend of Sire Raphael d'Urbino and of the Sires Primaticcio and Leonardo da Vinci, to whom he sent large sums of money. She obtained from her family a precious picture, painted by a Venetian named Titian (painter to the Emperor Charles, and in very high favor), in which there were portraits of Adam and Eve at the moment when God left them to wander about the terrestrial paradise. They were painted full height, in the costume of the period, in which it is difficult to make a mistake, because they were attired in their ignorance, and caparisoned with the divine grace which enveloped them—a difficult thing to execute on account of the color, but one in which the said Sire Titian excelled. The picture was put into the room of the poor king, who was then ill with the disease of which he eventually died. It had a great success at the Court of France, where every one wished to see it; but no one was able to until after the king's death, since at his desire it was allowed to remain in his room as long as he lived.

One day Catherine took with her to the king's room her son Francis and little Margy, who began to talk at random,

as children will. Now here, now there, these children had heard this picture of Adam and Eve spoken about, and had tormented their mother to take them to see it. Since the two little ones sometimes amused the old king, the princess royal complied with their request.

"You wished to see Adam and Eve, who were our first parents; there they are," said she.

Then she left them in great astonishment before Titian's picture, and seated herself by the bedside of the king, who delighted to watch the children.

"Which of the two is Adam?" said Francis, nudging his sister Margaret's elbow.

"You silly," replied she, "they would have to be dressed for one to know that!"—"*Droll Stories.*"

The Government of the Shrewmouse

THE good Gargantua decided to give the post of superintending his granaries to the shrewmouse, with the most ample powers—of justice, *committimus, missi dominici,* clergy, men-at-arms, and all. The shrewmouse promised faithfully to accomplish his task and to do his duty as a loyal beast, on condition that he lived on a heap of grain, which Gargantua thought perfectly fair. The shrewmouse began to caper about in his domain as happy as a king, reconnoitering his immense realms of mustard, principalities of sugar, provinces of ham, duchies of raisins, counties of chitterlings, and baronies of all sorts, scrambling on to the heap of grain, and frisking his tail against everything. To be brief, everywhere was the shrewmouse

received with honor by the pots, which kept a respectful silence, except two golden tankards, which knocked against each other like the bells of a church ringing a tocsin, at which he was much pleased, and thanked them, right and left, by a nod of the head, while promenading in the rays of the sun, which were illuminating his domain. Therein so splendidly did the brown color of his hair shine forth, that one would have thought him a northern king in his sable furs. After his twists, turns, jumps, and capers, he munched two grains of corn, sat upon the heap like a king in full court, and fancied himself the most illustrious of shrewmice. At this moment there came from their accustomed holes the gentlemen of the night-prowling court, who scamper with their little feet across the floors, these gentlemen being the rats, mice, and other gnawing, thieving, and crafty animals, of whom the citizens and housewives complain. When they saw the shrewmouse they took fright, and all remained shyly at the threshold of their dens. Among these common people, in spite of the danger, one old infidel of the trotting, nibbling race of mice advanced a little, and, putting his nose in the air, had the courage to stare my lord shrewmouse full in the face, although the latter was proudly squatted upon his rump, with his tail in the air. And he came to the conclusion that he was a devil, from whom nothing but scratches were to be got. From these facts Gargantua, in order that the high authority of his lieutenant might be universally known by all the shrewmice, cats, weasels, martins, field-mice, mice, rats, and other bad characters of the same kidney, had lightly dipped his muzzle, pointed as a larding-pin, in oil of musk, which all shrewmice have since inherited, because this one, in spite of the sage advice of Gargantua, rubbed himself against others of his breed. From this sprang the troubles

in Muzaraignia, of which I will give you a good account in an historical book when I get an opportunity.

Then an old mouse, or rat—the rabbis of the Talmud have not yet agreed concerning the species—perceiving by this perfume that this shrewmouse was appointed to guard the grain of Gargantua, and had been sprinkled with virtues, invested with full powers, and armed at all points, was alarmed lest he should no longer be able to live, according to the custom of mice, upon the meats, morsels, crusts, crums, leavings, bits, atoms, and fragments of this Canaan of rats. In this dilemma the good mouse, artful as an old courtier who had lived under two regencies and three kings, resolved to try the mettle of the shrewmouse and devote himself to the salvation of the jaws of his race. This would have been a laudable thing in a man, but it was far more so in a mouse belonging to a tribe who live for themselves alone, barefacedly and shamelessly, and who, in order to gratify themselves, would defile a consecrated wafer, gnaw a priest's stole without shame, and would drink out of a communion-cup, caring nothing for God. The mouse advanced with many a bow and scrape, and the shrewmouse let him advance rather near—for, to tell the truth, these animals are naturally short-sighted. Then this Curtius of nibblers made his little speech, not in the jargon of common mice, but in the polite language of shrewmice:

"My Lord, I have heard with very great interest of your glorious family, of which I am one of the most devoted slaves. I know the legend of your ancestors, who were thought much of by the ancient Egyptians, who held them in great veneration and worshiped them like other sacred birds. Nevertheless, your fur robe is so royally perfumed, and its color is so splendiferously tanned, that I am doubt-

ful if I recognize you as belonging to this race, since I have never seen any of them so gorgeously attired. However, you have swallowed the grain after the antique fashion. Your proboscis is a proboscis of sapience; you have kicked like a learned shrewmouse; but if you are a true shrewmouse you should have in I know not which part of your ear, I know not what special auditorial channel, which I know not what wonderful door closes I know not how; and I know not with what movements, by your secret commands to give you, I know not why, license not to listen to I know not what things, which would be displeasing to you, on account of the special and peculiar perfection of your faculty of hearing everything—which would often pain you."

"True," said the shrewmouse, "the door has just fallen. I hear nothing!"

"Ah, I see," said the old rogue.

And he made for the pile of corn, from which he commenced to take his store for the winter.

"Do you hear anything?" asked he.

"I hear the pit-a-pat of my heart."

"Kouick!" cried all the mice; "we shall be able to hoodwink him."

The shrewmouse, fancying that he had met with a faithful vassal, opened the trap of his musical orifice, and heard the noise of the grain going toward the hole. Then, without having recourse to forfeiture, the justice of commissaries sprang upon the old mouse and squeezed him to death. A glorious death, for this hero died in the thick of the grain, and was canonized as a martyr. The shrewmouse took him by the ears and laid him on the door of the granary, after the fashion of the Ottoman Porte, where my good Panurge was within an ace of being spitted. At the cries of the dying

wretch the rats, mice, and others made for their holes in great haste. When the night had fallen they came to the cellar, convoked for the purpose of holding a council to consider public affairs; to which meeting, in virtue of the Papirian and other laws, their lawful wives were admitted. The rats wished to pass before the mice, and serious quarrels about precedence nearly spoiled everything; but a big rat gave his arm to a mouse, and the gaffer rats and gammer mice being paired off in the same way, all were soon seated on their rumps, tails in air, muzzles stretched, whiskers stiff, and their eyes brilliant as those of a falcon. Then commenced a deliberation, which finished up with insults and a confusion worthy of an ecumenical council of holy fathers. One said this, and another said that, and a cat passing by took fright and ran away, hearing those strange noises: "Bou, bou, frou, ou, ou, houic, houic, briff, briffnac, nac, nac, fouix, fouix, trr, trr, trr, trr, za, za, zaaa, brr, brrr, raaa, ra, ra, ra, ra, fouix!" so well blended together in a Babel of sound that a council at the town-hall could not have made a greater hubbub.

During this tempest a little mouse, who was not old enough to enter parliament, thrust through a chink her inquiring snout, the hair on which was as downy as that of all mice, too downy to be caught. As the tumult increased, by degrees her body followed her nose, until she came to the hoop of a cask, against which she so dexterously squatted that she might have been mistaken for a work of art carved in antique bas-relief. Lifting his eyes to heaven to implore a remedy for the misfortunes of the state, an old rat perceived this pretty mouse, so gentle and shapely, and declared that the state might be saved by her. All the muzzles turned to this Lady of Good Help, became silent, and agreed to let her loose upon

the shrewmouse, and, in spite of the anger of certain envious mice, she was triumphantly marched round the cellar, where, seeing her walk mincingly, mechanically move her tail, shake her cunning little head, twitch her diaphanous ears, and lick with her little red tongue the hairs just sprouting on her cheeks, the old rats fell in love with her, and wagged their wrinkled, white-whiskered jaws with delight at the sight of her, as formerly the old men of Troy did, admiring the lovely Helen returning from her bath. Then the maiden was conducted to the granary, with instructions to make a conquest of the shrewmouse's heart, and save the fine red grain, as formerly the fair Hebrew, Esther, did for the chosen people, with the Emperor Ahasuerus, as it is written in the master-book, for *Bible* comes from the Greek word *Biblos,* as if to say the only book. The mouse promised to deliver the granaries, for by a lucky chance she was the queen of mice, a fair, plump, pretty little mouse, the most delicate little lady that ever scampered merrily across the floors, scratched between the walls, and gave utterance to little cries of joy at finding nuts, meal, and crums of bread in her path; a true fay, pretty and playful, with an eye clear as crystal, a little head, sleek skin, amorous body, pink feet, and velvet tail—a high-born mouse and polished speaker, with a natural love of bed and idleness—a merry mouse, more cunning than an old doctor of Sorbonne fed on parchment, lively, white-bellied, streaked on the back, with sweetly molded breasts, pearl-white teeth, and of a frank, open nature—in fact, a true king's morsel.

The pretty mouse did not beat long about the bush, and from the first moment that she trotted before the shrewmouse, she had enslaved him forever by her coquetries, affectations, friskings, provocations, little refusals, piercing

glances, wiles of a maiden who desires yet dares not, amorous oglings, little caresses, preparatory tricks, pride of a mouse who knows her value, laughings, squeakings, triflings, and other endearments, feminine, treacherous, and captivating ways, all traps which are abundantly used by the females of all nations. When, after many wrigglings, smacks in the face, nose-lickings, gallantries of amorous shrewmice, frowns, sighs, serenades, tit-bits, suppers and dinners on the pile of corn, and other attentions, the superintendent overcame the scruples of his beautiful mistress, he became the slave of this incestuous and illicit love, and the mouse, leading her lord by the snout, became queen of everything, nibbled his cheese, ate the sweets, and foraged everywhere. This the shrewmouse permitted the empress of his heart, although he was ill at ease, having broken his oath made to Gargantua, and betrayed the confidence placed in him.

Pursuing her advantage with the pertinacity of a woman, one night that they were joking together, the mouse remembered the dear old fellow her father, and desiring that he should make his meals off the grain, she threatened to leave her lover cold and lonely in his domain if he did not allow her to indulge her filial piety. In the twinkling of a mouse's eye he had granted letters patent, sealed with a green seal, with tags of crimson silk, to his wench's father, so that the Gargantuan palace was open to him at all hours, and he went at liberty to see his good virtuous daughter, kiss her on the forehead, and eat his fill—but always in a corner.

Then there arrived a venerable old rat, weighing about twenty-five ounces, with a white tail, marching like the president of a court of justice, wagging his head, and followed by fifteen or twenty nephews, all with teeth sharp as saws,

who demonstrated to the shrewmouse by little speeches and questions of all kinds that they, his relations, would soon be loyally attached to him, and would help him to count the things committed to his charge, arrange and ticket them, in order that when Gargantua came to visit them he would find everything in perfect order. There was an air of truth about these promises. The poor shrewmouse was, however, in spite of this speech, troubled by ideas from on high, and serious pricking of his shrewmousian conscience. Seeing that he turned up his nose at everything, went about slowly and with a careworn face, one morning the mouse, who was pregnant by him, conceived the idea of calming his doubts and easing his mind by a Sorbonnical consultation, and sent for the doctors of the tribe. During the day she introduced to him one, Master Evegault, who had just stepped out of a cheese where he lived in perfect abstinence, an old confessor of high degree, a merry fellow of good appearance, with a fine black skin, firm as a rock, and slightly tonsured on the head by the pat of a cat's claw. He was a grave rat, with a monastical paunch, having much studied scientific authorities by nibbling at their work in parchments, papers, books, and volumes of which certain fragments had remained upon his gray beard. In honor of, and great reverence for his great virtue and wisdom and his modest life, he was accompanied by a black troop of black rats, all bringing with them pretty little mice, their sweethearts, for, not having adopted the canons of the council of Chesil, it was lawful for them to have respectable women for concubines. These beneficed rats being arranged in two lines, you might have fancied them a procession of the university authorities going to Lendit. And they all began to sniff the victuals.

When the ceremony of seating them all was complete,

the old cardinal of the rats lifted up his voice, and in a good rat-Latin oration pointed out to the guardian of the grain that no one but God was superior to him; and that to God alone he owed obedience. And he entertained him with many fine phrases, stuffed with evangelical quotations, to disturb the principal and fog his flock—in fact, fine arguments interlarded with much sound sense. The discourse finished with a peroration full of high-sounding words in honor of shrewmice, among whom his hearer was the most illustrious and best beneath the sun. The oration considerably bewildered the keeper of the granaries.

This good gentleman's head was thoroughly turned, and he installed this fine-speaking rat and his tribe in his manor, where, night and day, his praises and little songs in his honor were sung, not forgetting his lady, whose little paw was kissed and little tail was sniffed at by them all. Finally the mistress, knowing that certain young rats were still fasting, determined to finish her work. Then she kissed her lord tenderly, loading him with love, and performing those little endearing antics of which one alone was sufficient to send a beast to perdition; and said to the shrewmouse that he wasted the precious time due to their love by traveling about, that he was always going here or there, and that she never had her proper share of him; that when she wanted his society he was either on the leads or chasing the cats, and that she wished him always to be ready to her hand like a lance, and kind as a bird. Then in her great grief she tore out a gray hair, declaring herself, weepingly, to be the most wretched little mouse in the world. The shrewmouse pointed out to her that she was mistress of everything, and wished to resist, but after the lady had shed a torrent of tears he implored a truce and considered her

request. Then instantly drying her tears, and giving him her paw to kiss, she advised him to arm some soldiers, trusty and tried rats, old warriors, who would go the rounds and keep watch. Everything was thus wisely arranged. The shrewmouse had the rest of the day to dance, play, and amuse himself, listen to the roundelays and ballads which the poets composed in his honor, play the lute and the mandolin, make acrostics, eat, drink, and be merry.

One day, his mistress having just risen from her confinement, after having given birth to the sweetest little mouse-sorex or sorex-mouse, I know not what name was given to this mongrel fruit of love, whom you may be sure the gentleman of the long robe would manage to legitimatize, a grand feast was given in the granaries, to which no court festival or gala can be compared, not even that of the Field of the Cloth of Gold. In every corner mice were making merry. Everywhere there were dancers, concerts, banquets, sarabands, music, joyous songs, and epithalamia. The rats had broken open the pots, uncovered the jars, lapped the gallipots, and unpacked the stores. The mustard was strewn over the place, the hams were mangled and the corn scattered. Everything was rolling, tumbling, and falling about the floor, and the little rats dabbled in puddles of green sauce, and mice navigated oceans of sweetmeats, and the old folks carried off the pasties. There were mice astride on salt tongues. Field-mice were swimming in the pots, and the most cunning of them were carrying the corn into their private holes, profiting by the confusion to make ample provision for themselves. No one passed the quince confection of Orleans without saluting it with one nibble, and oftener with two. It was like a Roman carnival. In short, any one with a sharp ear might have heard the frizzling frying-pans, the cries and

clamors of the kitchens, the crackling of the furnaces, the noise of turnspits, the creaking of baskets, the haste of the confectioners, the click of the meat-jacks, and the noise of the little feet scampering thick as hail over the floor. It was a bustling wedding-feast, where people come and go, footmen, stablemen, cooks, musicians, buffoons, where every one pays compliments and makes a noise. In short, so great was the delight that they all kept up a general wagging of the head to celebrate this eventful night.

Suddenly there was heard the awful footfall of Gargantua, who was ascending the stairs of his house to visit the granaries, and made the planks, the beams, and everything else tremble. Certain old rats asked each other what this lordly footstep might mean with which they were unacquainted, and some of them decamped. And they did well, for the lord and master entered suddenly. Perceiving the confusion these gentlemen had made, seeing his preserves eaten, his mustard unpacked, and everything dirtied and scratched about, he put his feet upon these lively vermin without giving them time to squeak, and thus spoiled their best clothes, satins, pearls, velvets, and rubbish, and upset the feast.

—*"Droll Stories."*

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